DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 362 438 SO 023 230

AUTHOR Dean, Kenda Creasy; Yost, Paul R.
TITLE A Synthesis of the Research on, and a Descriptive Overview of Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish Religious Youth Programs in the United States.
SPONS AGENCY Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE Feb 91
NOTE 169p.; Commissioned for the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development's Task Force on Youth Development and Community Programs.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC07 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Christianity; Comparative Analysis; Educational Change; Elementary Secondary Education; *Judaism; Leadership Training; *Program Evaluation; *Religious Education; *Student Development; *Youth Programs

ABSTRACT

This document combines the findings of two projects for the purpose of making some overall observations about the state of religious youth work in the United States. The first project was a review of the literature on such programs. Research on the topic is rare, while a vast body of indirectly related research spans many disciplines and empirical as well as theoretical vantage points. The second project set out to describe the current landscape of Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jewish youth programs in the country. From the research it became apparent that: (1) religiosity seems to offer at least a degree of protection to youth against at-risk behavior; (2) current models of religious work do not reflect religious educators' concern for adolescents' integration into the total religious community; (3) religious youth programs now serve the young in more ways than ever, while fewer youths participate; (4) Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish youth programs have similar goals, assumptions, delivery systems, and educational processes; (5) no one knows how many youths are served by religious youth programs; (6) four out of five adult leaders of religious youth programs are volunteers; and (7) religious youth programs tend not to be accountable to anyone beyond local parent organizations. The groups, however, tend to share committed leadership, youth empowerment, cohesive national structures, a relationship intensive process, and other directedness. A 203-item reference list is attached. (SG)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

50

ED 362 438

A SYNTHESIS OF THE RESEARCH ON, AND A DESCRIPTIVE OVERVIEW OF PROTESTANT, CATHOLIC, AND JEWISH RELIGIOUS YOUTH PROGRAMS IN THE UNITED STATES

Kenda Creasy Dean, Director, The Wesley Foundation
University of Maryland at College Park

Research Associate: Paul R. Yost, Department of Psychology
University of Maryland at College Park

February 1991

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

X Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

BUBY
TAKANISHI

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

SO 023 230

This paper was commissioned by the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development for its Task Force on Youth Development and Community Programs. The views expressed and findings offered are those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent the position of the Council or Carnegie Corporation. Responsibility for the accuracy of the content of the paper rests with the authors.

Permission to reproduce or quote from this paper should be obtained from the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I deeply appreciate the on-going guidance and insights of Task Force members, Thomas J. Harvey, Kenneth B. Smith, and Wilma Tisch; the critical and thoughtful reviews of Corporation staff, Jane Quinn and Ruby Takanishi, and of external reviewers, William R. Myers, Robin Maas, and Elizabeth Tidball. I am especially indebted to the meticulous work of Paul R. Yost who, as research associate for this paper, gave me so much more than research in the course of this project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary ii

A Brief History and Introduction 2

PART I:
A Synthesis of the Printed Literature on Religious Institutions and American Youth 9

Religious Education and Youth Programs 12

Theoretical Literature 15
Apologetic Literature 15

Adolescent Needs and Religious Youth Programs 16
Religiosity as a Factor in the Behavior of Youth . . . 19

Dimensions of Religiosity 20
Variables and Adolescent Religiosity 21
Religiosity and At-Risk Adolescent Behavior . . . 22
Religiosity and Prosocial Adolescent Behavior . . 26

Gaps in the Printed Literature Related to Religious Youth Programs 28

PART II:
A Descriptive Overview of Religious Youth Programs in the United States 32

Status of Religious Youth Programs 33
Goals and Assumptions of Religious Youth Work 37

Cultural/Faith Identity 38
Adolescent Development 41

Delivery Systems in Religious Youth Work 44

Structures in Religious Youth Programs 44
Educational Content and Process 52
Models of Religious Youth Programs 53

Extent of Service 60

Service to Young Adolescents 62
Service to Ethnic and Low Income Youth 66
Service to At-Risk Adolescents 68
Service to Girls and Boys 71

Accountability 72

Adult Leaders in Religious Youth Programs:
Who Are They? 75
Volunteers 75
Professionals 75

Leadership Development:
How Are Religious Youth Leaders Trained? 76
Reaching Volunteers 77
Reaching Clergy 80
Leadership Training for Special Needs 82
Young Adolescents 83
At-Risk Adolescents 84

Financial Concerns in Religious Youth Programs:
How Well Are Religious Youth Programs Funded? 84

PART III:
Strengths and Future Directions 89

Committed Leadership 91
Youth Empowerment 92
Cohesive National Structures 95
Relationship-intensive Process 97
Other-directedness 99

PART IV:
Challenges and Strategies for Improvement 101

The Challenge of Strengthening Adult Leadership . . . 102
The Challenge of Reaching Unserved Youth 109
The Challenge of Expanding Program Boundaries 114
The Challenge of Networking 116
The Challenge of Institutional Collaboration 118
The Challenge of Accountability 119

Conclusion 122

Endnotes 127

Appendices 130

References 152

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Today, literally hundreds of "religious youth programs" take root every year, some in congregations, some in independent religious movements, some in the bosom of a parent organization, some entirely whole unto themselves. These religious youth programs are often loosely educational in intent, but are primarily designed to perpetuate faith and to ensure safe passage from childhood into the adult world. The term "religious youth program" implies an entity with identifiable boundaries. In reality, religious youth programs are fluid and varied, with few widely agreed upon parameters, little standardization of practice, and no verifiable outcomes. What they have in common is a twofold vision for the youth they serve: 1) a desire to foster in them a specific cultural/faith identity; and 2) a resolve to provide them with the tools and nourishment necessary to make a smooth and healthy transition from childhood into adulthood.

In many ways, this paper is a combination of two projects for the purpose of making some overall observations about the state of religious youth work in the United States. The first project, represented in Part I of this paper, was a review of the literature on religious youth programs in the U.S. The literature on the subject has rightly been described as "untamed"; research specifically pertaining to religious youth programs and adolescents is rare, while a vast body of indirectly-related research spans many disciplines and empirical as well as theoretical vantage points. The second project, described in Part II of this paper, set out to describe the current landscape of Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jewish youth programs across the

country. In the absence of "hard data" on this subject, both the printed literature and key leaders in religious youth work were consulted for this report.

Discoveries

A project as massive in scope as this one generates far more information than can be quickly summarized or easily digested. At the risk of oversimplifying the painstaking contributions of many persons consulted during this project, the following insights seem to offer guidance for those engaged in policy decisions concerning religious youth work:

1) Religiosity appears to offer at least a degree of protection to youth against at-risk behavior. In particular, participation in a religious institution seems to help compensate for other "developmental deficits" which may confront an adolescent. A limited number of studies also correlate high religiosity with more prosocial behavior in youth.

2) Literature from within the field of religious education has argued for more than two decades that young people should be integrated into the total religious community, rather than "ghettoized" into discrete religious youth "programs." By and large, current models of religious youth work do not reflect religious educators' concern for adolescents' integration into the total religious community, with the discrete religious youth "program" being the norm for religious youth work. How well this youth "program" is integrated into community life seems to depend largely on ethnicity, history, and cultural identity of the parent religious body.

3) Religious youth programs today serve youth in more ways than

ever before, but fewer youth are participating in them. The 1990s signal an era of massive cuts in funding, resources, and personnel for religious youth programs. The exceptions to this trend are the conservative evangelical Christian community, where religious youth work has seen moderate growth, and the Jewish community, where religious youth work seems to be relatively stable.

4) Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jewish youth programs share similar goals, assumptions, delivery systems, and educational processes. All seek to imbue teenagers with a sense of cultural/faith identity and the tools necessary to grow into healthy adulthood. Most assume that participation in a religious youth program helps protect young people from at-risk behavior, and that a caring community and a religious identity are important to healthy and well-rounded adolescent development. Most share delivery systems which develop community through structures like youth groups, formal instruction, worship, service, residential experiences, and leadership development opportunities. The Jewish Community Center figures prominently into Jewish youth movements, and all religious youth programs recognize the significant adult-youth relationship as the primary means of impacting young peoples' lives. Most religious youth programs say that their educational process is highly relationship-oriented and experiential, citing this approach as the most developmentally-appropriate means of communicating identity to young people.

5) No one knows how many youth are served by religious youth programs. Some research has implied that one-third to one-half of American teenagers may be involved in these programs, but these studies are scarce. Young adolescents are more available for religious youth programs than are older teenagers; although current

religious youth programs tend to target older youth, the trend is toward increased young adolescent participation. Despite American society's increasing multiculturalism, religious youth programs remain largely white, middle class, and female in composition. Many religious communities do not perceive at-risk youth as a special category of adolescents, and tend to assume all teenagers are at-risk. Those who do treat at-risk youth as a special category are frustrated by the lack of resources, training, and knowledge of how to serve them.

6) Four out of five adult leaders of religious youth programs are volunteers. Ironically, these are the leaders for whom leadership training is <u>least</u> available. Of youth leader professionals, clergy represent only a small number, but their influence in religious communities makes their knowledge about and interest in religious youth work a critical factor in its very existence, as well as in its potential success. Yet clergy receive virtually no preparation for religious youth work as part of their seminary education, and seminaries do not encourage clergy to develop interests in youth work. The lack of leadership training for adults who work with religious youth programs is widely considered the most serious problem facing religious youth work today.

7) Religious youth programs tend not to be accountable to anyone beyond local parent organizations. While this degree of autonomy helps them respond flexibly to community needs, it inhibits sharing knowledge, resources, or programs with others who may be interested in reaching adolescents, and it often results in poor leadership going unnoticed and uncorrected.

Strengths and Challenges

Religious youth work is not without its strengths, however. Despite the mixed signals religious youth workers receive regarding the importance of their work and their value to the religious community, religious youth leaders cite many areas of their work with pride. To date, these strengths have emerged without much intentional cultivation on the part of the religious community as a whole; their continuation, however, will depend upon religious communities' willingness to invest in them and consciously develop them during the years ahead. Religious youth leaders identify five strengths common to the field:

1) Committed leadership.

   The commitment of adults who work with youth is widely admired, and some observers have witnessed a growing number of persons interested in pursuing religious youth leadership professionally. However, cultural dynamics and competing priorities on the part of religious communities themselves will work against the recruitment of volunteer leadership in the 1990s, and the willingness of clergy to commit themselves to youth work as a professional option will remain sluggish.

2) Youth empowerment.

   Youth initiatives in co-leadership, peer ministry, and other forms of leadership development will continue in the years ahead, especially where youth leader professionals direct programs.

3) Cohesive national structures

   Participation in national religious youth events and policy making bodies results in an intensified sense of ownership in the youth who participate. These activities become training grounds for future religious leaders. However, national religious youth structures have steadily lost budgetary support in recent decades, leading to speculation that their future impact may be questionable.

4) Relationship-intensive process

The relationship-centered, experiential educational process characterizing much religious youth work is a strength likely to expand in influence as more attention is paid to age-level appropriate programming for young adolescents.

5) "Other-directedness"

Religious youth leaders value the sense of service which is part of the identity of many religious youth programs. More opportunities for hands-on service are likely to be found in religious youth programs of the 1990s.

Policy Considerations

With these strengths in mind, religious youth leaders are still gravely concerned about the directions religious youth work is not likely to pursue without resources and an intentional guiding vision. Obviously, more money would help meet these challenges. But equally important to the future of religious youth work are the following:

1) The challenge of strengthening adult leadership. While religious youth leader professionals can and do receive excellent training through a variety of avenues, volunteers and clergy do not. Training is available, but is often not accessible for--or, in the case of clergy, valued by--those who stand to influence youth most in religious settings. Yet most religious communities are led by a sole clergyperson, often without the benefit of volunteers or professional staff assigned to youth work. While volunteers need training because they comprise 80% of the adult leadership in religious youth work, clergy need training because they are often the only resource a congregation has to initiate work with adolescents.

2) The challenge of reaching unserved youth. In the case of religious youth programs, this generally means expanding service to include young adolescents, at-risk, and ethnic/urban youth, who are

currently overlooked by most religious youth work.

3) The challenge of expanding program boundaries. Not only do religious youth programs stand to benefit by exploring a range of programs that address faith/cultural identity issues and developmental needs, but the ways in which these programs are implemented can be broadened. In particular, religious youth work implies a concern for reaching families as well as individual youth, recognizing that youth flourish best when supported by healthy home as well as community environments. The diversity of religious youth programs available to adolescents should reflect "a cafeteria-style meal, not a sit-down dinner" as religious communities begin to address the multiplicity of youth cultures pouring adolescents into society, and the multidimensional contributions which religious communities can make to these teenagers' well-being.

4) The challenge of improving networks, especially human networks, will help reduce the epidemic "burnout" in the field of religious youth work, and will help connect religious youth workers with other community leaders who serve youth in similar ways.

5) The challenge of institutional collaboration serves the same function on an institutional level. Religious communities are not the sole sources of formation for adolescents, and in fact figure only marginally in their ability to influence teenagers. The impact of any single institution is magnified when it works in concert with other organizations who seek to attain similar goals.

6) The challenge of accountability takes seriously religious youth programs' need to be responsive to the youth they serve, the professional integrity of the field, and the need for objectivity when institutional partnerships begin to be created in the community.

Advantages Religious Communities Offer Policy Makers

Religious communities stand to wield tremendous influence in the shaping of youth and in the forging of community partnerships to serve them. They are the most available public institution in American society: every community, burg, and urban center has a church or a synagogue in its midst as a symbolic, if not an actual, hub of community interaction. Historically, religious communities have played a much larger role in the weaving together of community threads than they do today. However, religious communities can still serve as synthesizers of common agendas for youth work. Clergy, at their best, are trained to become developers of "community," and they can still offer leadership here. If encouraged, this "community developer" model of religious leadership can be intentionally addressed by seminaries. The created community of a religious group can serve as a microcosm community into which young adolescents may safely integrate. While religious communities are more homogenous than the community at large, they provide valuable laboratories in human relationships and intergenerational experience.

Policy makers, too, can bolster religious communities' role in the shaping of young people in society. By offering religious communities incentives for institutional collaboration, by validating religious groups' role in positively influencing the lives of adolescents, by supporting the use of foundation funds for projects which involve religious communities and projects in the religious sector, policy makers help to lay foundations for churches and synagogues to lead the way in what Francis Ianni has called a "community charter" committed to the healthy development of American young people.

Conclusion

Next to family and schools, religious communities are the most pervasive institutions in American society. At present, religious communities, like most other community organizations, function as independent corporations in a world full of competing independent corporations. Yet the common denominator in all of the challenges facing religious youth programs in the twenty-first century is that they demand religious youth programs' entry into the public arena--the very arena in which the religious community first influenced American society as a chief interpreter of community existence. If religious communities are to address young people in the coming century, then they must again do so as participants in a common charter which provides for the welfare of adolescents. If the empirical evidence is correct, then perhaps there is a quantifiable case for encouraging linkages between religious programs and teenagers. Empirical evidence aside, religious organizations remain key actors in the community charter capable of offering young people congruence instead of chaos on their journey to adulthood.

A BRIEF HISTORY AND INTRODUCTION

From the dawn of the Judeo-Christian era, the religious traditions of Jews and Christians have harbored a special place for the young. Some of the traditions' most beloved scriptures celebrate God's choice of youth for divine missions: a boy prophet named Samuel; a shepherd named David; a prophet "called" from conception named Jeremiah; and, in Christian circles, an unwed teenage mother named Mary. Even before Western society gave rise to a developmental stage called "adolescence," religious tradition pointed to a God who paid specific attention to the young.

For the better part of two millenia, Western culture's treatment of youth followed a different pattern. Children were economic necessities for family survival; for the most part religious communities did not view children as objects of special attention, except for developing rites of passage at the "age of reason"--bar/bat mitzvahs, baptism/confirmation--which admitted the child into adult society. Childhood in the New World was short; the Puritans brought Calvinism's indefatigable work ethic to the colonies and apprenticed children to the tasks of adulthood (Nordbeck, 1990).

By the late nineteenth century, however, industrialization gave rise to a new class of people in society by displacing young persons from the work force. At the same time, immigration patterns rapidly increased America's religious pluralism, and a gradual shift toward child-centered family and educational values led to new understandings of the young. With industrialization and improved health care, families needed fewer children to survive, and an unprecedented kind of

American family emerged: the family in which all the children were teenagers. By the turn of the century, psychologists, educators, parents, boys-workers, and urban reformers stumbled collectively into what historian Joseph Kett has called "the era of the adolescent" (Kett, 1977).

In the midst of this rapidly changing society, the church was the first institution to spawn national activities intentionally designed to involve youth. In 1831, the First Reformed Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia founded the Juvenile Missionary Society, an idea that quickly spread to churches in New York and surrounding areas. Within five years, the Women's Christian Temperance Union recruited Cold Water Armies to provide wholesome forms of recreation for teenagers, thereby saving them from the perils of alcohol. These Cold Water Armies did more than march in temperance parades; they organized youth choirs, developed social activities, and engaged in service projects to aid the poor and needy (Erickson, 1989).

By 1851, the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) was established in Boston, followed quickly by the Young Women's Christian Association and The Young Men's and Women's Hebrew Associations. Such religious youth organizations became the prototype for a new era of "youth programs" designed to meet a range of interests, religious and otherwise, of young people in their communities. While "Y's" addressed broad needs of young people, most of whom were single young adults who had left home to find work in the cities, both Protestant and Catholic churches began to develop programs specifically designed to maintain and promote religious identity in their young.

One of the most far-reaching of these efforts was the American

Sunday School movement, a grass roots volunteer initiative which involved all age groups, including teenagers, in the ownership and leadership of Christian education. Although the "Sunday School" had been born in England out of a need to provide poor children with free schooling, the advent of public education in the U.S. turned "Sunday Schools" into bastions of religious instruction, social interaction, and lay leadership development in the church. The "Sunday School Teachers Institutes" of the early 1860's became the first systematic leadership training program in religious youth work. Between 1869 and 1914, local, regional, national, and even international "Sunday School Conventions" appeared; one historian described these gatherings as "somewhat like the quadrennial meetings of Republicans and Democrats, except there was more lemonade than liquor consumed and not so much overt political conflict" (Lynn and Wright, 1971, pp. 94-95). These conventions modelled the national youth event still popular in religious youth work today.

Meanwhile, local parishes established juvenile mission societies and youth sodalities in an effort to meet the social, as well as the spiritual, needs of young persons. The most successful of these was the Society of Christian Endeavor, a nondenominational association founded in 1881 which inspired at least fifty imitations in Protestantism alone, and which still informs much modern Protestant youth ministry (Erickson, 1989). At the same time, Roman Catholic immigration during the nineteenth century startled white Protestant cultural leaders into establishing formal educational vehicles like Horace Mann's "Common School," which "swept the nation in near-religious fervor with a goal toward forming the modern American citizen" (Myers, 1991b, p. 7). In response, Catholics embraced their historic mandate

to educate their young in the traditions of the faith, and American parochial education for Catholic youth was born.

Today, although the fluid and autonomous nature of local congregations makes religious youth programs impossible to count, religious communities are among the largest producers of youth programs in the United States. More than a third of those groups listed in the 1990-1991 Directory of American Youth Organizations are religiously-affiliated; this resource, moreover, omits most local organizations and many denominational programs. Most religious youth programs are the result of a local parish or synagogue's concern for providing identity and guidance to their young, and these efforts manifest themselves in various ways. Christian and Jewish adults alike want their teenagers to own religious identity and to grow into healthy, functioning adults in the community. This vision mobilizes scores of volunteers, dollars, and young people for religious youth organizations every year.

Religious youth programs vary widely in objectives, structure and effectiveness, but together they bear eloquent testimony to the fact that adolescents are valued by religious communities. The question is, what, if anything, do religious communities contribute to the welfare of the adolescent? The purpose of this paper is to explore that question particularly in the context of what Christians call "youth ministry" and what the Jewish community generally refers to as "religious youth movements." To do this we must ask both "What are religious communities doing for youth?" and "How well are they doing it?" We must ascertain where religious communities are meeting the needs of adolescents, and where more needs to happen. We will also need to make certain predictions about what religious youth work may

look like in the future. Finally, we must ask if, in fact, religious communities can contribute positively to adolescent development, how can they maximize their chances of making a difference? The last section of this paper will identify some strategies for addressing the needs which have been identified.

Method

In many ways, research on religious youth programs defies "hard data." Very little has been written about the relationship between the religious youth program and the adolescent directly; yet substantial information exists which impinges on this relationship indirectly, including non-empirical, theoretical works and the knowledge of practitioners themselves. The following report summarizes findings gleaned from two sources: the printed literature related to religious work with young adolescents in the United States, and extensive interviews with various national leaders in religious youth work.

The printed literature consulted for this project represents a number of vantage points in religious research. In addition to those sources located through the major national indexes, publishers known for their work with religious youth professionals[1] were contacted directly for relevant information which, due to specialized audience appeal or recency has not been indexed nationally. While much of this literature is not scholarly in nature, it contains statistical information, case studies, and philosophical essays valuable to the understanding of religious youth work.[2] Publications drawn from the theoretical literature in religious education were also useful, particularly in establishing philosophical contexts for religious communities' responses to young people. Where possible, denominations' and organi-

zations' internal youth-related publications were requested, and research groups known for work in religion and adolescents were contacted for assistance in locating relevant studies.[3] Finally, resources catalogued at the United Jewish Association/Federation library in New York City were perused for studies specifically pertaining to Jewish youth.[4]

Equally important to this project, however, were the many phone interviews conducted with national leaders in religious youth work. Denominational youth staff from all major branches of Protestantism, Catholicism, and Judaism were contacted for this report, including the national youth ministry and/or Christian education staff persons for the ten largest Protestant denominations in the United States that report membership figures.[5] Their contributions were augmented by interviews with other denominational leaders solicited for the purpose of inclusiveness.[6] Staff persons for several national independent religious youth movements also contributed to this project. Included in this category were non-denominational Jewish youth movements, Zionist youth organizations, and a number of "parachurch" groups, nondenominational national Christian youth organizations which are independent of a single denomination or a local church, and which tend to operate on high school campuses.[7]

Youth research organizations and support agency staff were also interviewed by phone.[8] Represented among these were entrepreneurial youth ministry organizations, an influential group of for-profit and not-for-profit private enterprises that develop and make available age-level appropriate resources for Christian youth ministry, and training for religious youth leaders.[9] Finally, the unpublished research of a corps of theological educators committed to religious

youth work provided insight into religious youth work generally, and especially into the nature and extent of the theological schools' work to prepare leadership for religious youth work in the 1990s.[10] Some organizations were deemed beyond the scope of this paper since they have rehabilitative, civic, and academic purposes as well as religious dimensions. These include religious-oriented community social services (e.g., Catholic Charities, Jewish Family Services); religious-affiliated civic organizations (e.g., Boy Scouts, "Y" programs); and religious schools which provide academic instruction as well as confessional teachings (e.g., parochial schools, yeshivas).

A SYNTHESIS OF THE PRINTED LITERATURE ON RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS AND AMERICAN YOUTH 11

Research on religion and adolescence is plentiful and diverse--so diverse, in fact, that religion has been linked to almost every aspect of adolescent development except physical growth.[12] The high value which young people place on belief in God is well-documented (Benson, Williams & Johnson, 1987; Coles, 1989; Gallup, 1987 cited in Roehlkepartain, 1988b; Girl Scouts, 1989), as is at least the moderate value ascribed to institutional religion and the role religion plays in teenagers' own lives (Girl Scouts, 1989; Benson, 1990; Benson et al., 1987; Bachman, Johnston, & O'Malley, 1987). Research has also probed the nature of religious experience and religious identity among youth (Elkind & Elkind, 1962; Elkind, 1961; Elkind, 1962; Elkind, 1963; Goldman, 1968; London & Frank, 1987; London & Hirschfeld, 1989). Since the publication of James W. Fowler's work on the stages of faith development, substantial attention has been given to theories of faith development and character formation, including among youth (Dykstra, 1981; Fowler, 1981; Miller, 1982).

Although literature of this nature abounds, the category suggested by the heading above, "printed literature on religious institutions and American youth," requires explanation. Research expressly devoted to religious <u>institutions</u> and youth is scarce, and studies concerning religious-affiliated <u>programs</u> for youth are even more so. To complicate matters, the research that indirectly impinges on religious communities' work with youth is pursued from two very different philosophical perspectives which rarely intersect.

On the one hand is a body of literature originating in theories of religious education. These theories are intended to provide the foundation on which practitioners in religious communities may base their practice of religious youth leadership. Influential as some of this literature is to the practice of religious youth work, it is rarely quantifiable and does not provide much assistance in evaluating the effectiveness of such programs.

On the other hand is a body of empirical literature originating, for the most part, in the social and behavioral sciences. This literature focuses on adolescent "religiosity"--religious beliefs and/or behaviors that are measurable in some way--and its relationship to behavioral outcomes. Although this literature supports the existence of various relationships between "religiosity" and teenage behavior, it is usually too far removed from institutional religious contexts to be useful to practitioners who actually work with these teenagers in religious settings.

These two trajectories--literature grounded in religious education, its method, and its theories and literature grounded in empirical studies in the social and behavioral sciences--intersect in the religious youth program which endeavors to create a sound educational environment, conducive to religious experience, which inspires (or prevents) certain beliefs and behaviors in adolescents. Currently, however, little dialogue exists to bridge these two points of view, and few efforts have been made to blend or re-shape them into digestible matter for youth-serving programs in American religious communities.

For this reason, this paper addresses these two fields of literature separately. The next few pages will summarize, first, some of

the theories of religious education that have been applied to religious youth programs. Second, the scant information which, in some way, addresses both the needs of adolescents and the religious youth programs will be discussed. Finally, the available literature on youth "religiosity" and its relationship to adolescent behaviors will be summarized. This section will conclude with a discussion of gaps in the literature itself.

Religious Education and Youth Programs

Research analyzing religious communities' programmatic responses to adolescents is scarce. The material that does exist on religious youth programs usually appears in popular manuals and magazines which address the concerns of program leaders seeking practical wisdom; this literature is often quite credible but it suffers from an over-reliance on first-person narratives and case studies and, while helpful, is often only marginally reliable as research. Other relevant literature, originating in the religious community itself, has been generated by the field of religious education, either in the form of religious educational theory adapted for youth programs, or in the form of apologetics defending the need to include religious youth work in religious communities and advocating ways to make it more viable.

Theoretical literature

Much of the theoretical literature relevant to religious youth work is tucked within larger documents on religious education or is slipped into the introductory chapters of manuals intended primarily as practical guides (Rice, 1987; Shaheen 1986). A few religious educators have made religious youth work an area of special interest,

and their work provides the bulk of literature examining religious communities' responses to teenagers. These educators are more invested in the religious life of adolescents and their relationship with religious communities than they are in any particular model of youth work. They tend to emphasize teenage faith development over total personal development, although none would deny the importance of the latter. When it comes to religious youth work itself, they invariably describe it as it should be rather than as it is. However, their work provides important foundations for religious communities' work with teenagers, and therefore is included in this report.

Little (1968) was one of the first to adapt educational principles to religious youth work specifically, arguing that the integration of adolescents into the entire community and mission of a congregation is both a developmentally and theologically appropriate program response for youth. Little believes that youth are not only recipients of Christian education, but are educators themselves, guided by adult leaders who act as role models. Youth both receive and participate in the religious institution's response to its youth. Holderness (1976b) and Martinson (1988) have articulated similar congregational perspectives in ensuing decades, suggesting that religious institutions should provide structures that assist youth in building relationships with adults in the congregation who become significant to them, acting as guarantors for the life of faith.

One of the most prolific and radical proponents of this philosophy of religious education is Westerhoff (1980, 1985), who believes that religious institutions best serve the needs of youth by abolishing many programmatic structures generally imposed during adolescence, such as Sunday School. Westerhoff views many such struc-

tures as developmentally inappropriate, arguing instead for community support of teenagers' inevitable religious questioning. To Westerhoff, the religious institution responds to the needs of adolescents when it enables them to experience community wholly by participation in the congregation's rituals, mission, and interpersonal relationships, and then helps them reflect on that experience. This process, in Westerhoff's thinking, leads naturally to behavior appropriate to the religious life. As a whole, religious educators like Little and Westerhoff emphasize the importance of teenagers' relationships in religious communities which value them as significant, contributing members. It is through participation in these communities that religious identity is imparted as a teenager experiences belonging to the community and to God.

Echoing adolescents' need for total integration into community religious life, Harris (1981) suggests that the religious development of young people is the responsibility of the entire religious community. However, Harris believes that the starting point for religious youth work is not the religious community, but the "environment of youth, with its political, social and cultural dynamic. We shall never understand young people apart from their own time and place" (Harris, 1981, p. 51). Underscoring the need for recognizing cultural context, Warren argues that faith identity in youth begins when they are empowered to liberate themselves from cultural manipulation (1982, 1987a, 1987b). Spiritual development, believes Warren, is not just a psychological phenomenon; it is social and political as well. Educators like Harris and Warren submit that religious education's greatest contribution to youth is empowering them to become "culture critics"

who call into question oppressive elements of the larger culture, such as the media, that obstruct teenagers' appreciation of God, themselves and the world.

Apologetic literature

Other religious educators have committed themselves to advocacy on behalf of youth in Christian religious communities, and offer critiques of current practices as well as admonish churches to make religious youth work a high priority even when denominational priorities lie elsewhere. The landmark document in American Catholic communities was the 1980 Hope for the Decade, a compilation of symposia reports which evaluated religious youth work in the Catholic church. The report identified avenues for growth and renewal and then issued explicit charges to the church to develop youth ministry around eight priority issues: parish renewal, sexuality, family, youth leadership, faith and justice, youth culture, religious identity, and collaboration with the institutional church (Murphy, Guerin, Roberto & Brown, 1980, p. 120). These issues comprised an "agenda for action" in the 1980s, a period in which Catholic youth ministry experienced unprecedented growth (Roberto, 1991).

Protestant advocates for religious youth work lack a parallel document. Evangelical Protestants find ready audiences in their denominations which prioritize youth ministry, thereby reducing their need for apologetic literature. By contrast, mainline Protestants exhibit very low levels of commitment to youth ministry, so youth ministry apologetics abound but often target deaf ears. One significant attempt to change this phenomenon was the Lilly Endowment's extensive project on "Youth Ministry and Theological Education" in the

late 1980s; this project gathered the insights of leading Christian educators across the U.S. who, after three years, came to this frustrating conclusion:

> It is time to take a hard look at the mainline churches' ministry with youth. . . . How are the mainline churches faring? Statistics tell the tale: Not only are they failing to hold on to their own youth and young adults, but they are increasingly losing them, not to other churches, but to no religion at all! . . . . Seminaries, denominations, and congregations are not investing sufficient energy and resources in this area. A large percentage of seminary graduates do not see work with youth as an integral part of their ministries. Denominations have cut back in curriculum resources and staff in this area in the face of shrinking budgets. Many congregations are perfectly willing to keep youth in a marginalized position; they want the church to meet teens' social needs and keep them out of trouble, but they are not really interested in involving them in the larger congregation's struggle to discern what it means to be a disciple of Jesus in the contemporary world (Osmer, 1989, pp. 1-2).

Whether these words describe the situation facing mainline Protestant youth work alone, or whether they simply underscore the fact that mainline Protestant youth ministry is bound to reflect the lukewarm temperature of mainline Protestant health as a whole, was not at issue in the Lilly project. What these religious educators believe to be at stake is a generation of adolescents whom religious communities are losing, not to other churches, but to the values of secular culture (Osmer, 1989). Those theological educators on the Lilly-funded project team viewed religious youth programs as more than tools for institutional maintenance; they viewed them as keys of survival for adolescents threatened by a world whose values inevitably place them at-risk.

Adolescent Needs and Religious Youth Programs

In the early research on the dynamics of young adolescence, religion was only a marginal concern. Similarly, many religious youth organizations failed to keep pace programmatically with existing re-

search on the principles of adolescent development (Little, 1982). By the 1980s, however, a shift gradually began to occur. Researchers in early adolescence were noticed by religious communities primarily because some of this research specifically examined the beliefs and practices of young teenagers from major religious traditions.[13] Religious youth leaders took notice, and a small but important body of literature began to argue that the needs of adolescents--rather than the needs of the religious community--should be the starting point for religious youth programming.

The premiere essay in this category is Anita M. Farel's summary of the Center for Early Adolescence's 1982 study Early Adolescence and Religion: A Status Study. Farel lists eight characteristics of "responsive" religious youth programs; that is, programs that take seriously both the needs of the young adolescent and the religious community (Farel, 1982). According to Farel, such programs:

- Provide a comfortable setting in which young people can explore the bases of their religious faith.
- Connect religious traditions with varied opportunities for self-discovery and self-definition.
- Involve both young people and their parents, to foster mutual understanding.
- Have clearly articulated rules that youth group members appreciate and accept.
- Are guided by mature adults who are comfortable with young people and are willing to explore sensitive issues with them.
- Provide opportunities for young people to gain a sense of competence by performing meaningful tasks in their communities and their congregations.
- Include time for laughter, high spirits, and physical activity as well as time for contemplation and opportunities to be alone.

- Encourage mutual acceptance and friendship among the young people.

Drawing liberally from Farel's work and from the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development's 1989 study Turning Points, Brian Reynolds, co-founder of the Center for Youth Ministry Development, developed a "Ministry With Young Adolescents," a concise document in which Reynolds instructs Christian youth ministers to develop age-level appropriate ministry for young teenagers (Reynolds, 1990). Designed for Roman Catholics but broadly applicable to any religious community, Reynolds' essay deals more with young adolescents than with ministry, but it is helpful for guiding practitioners on the art of blending young adolescents' needs and the concerns of a local parish in a religious youth program. A similar approach, written from a Protestant's perspective but also pertinent to Catholics, is Wayne Rice's Junior High Ministry, a slightly bulkier interpretation of needs-based religious programming, but appealing to practitioners for its section on age-level appropriate program suggestions for young adolescents (Rice, 1987).

Benson and Williams' Determining Needs in Your Youth Ministry examines needs-based youth programming on an individual basis. Their handbook offers step-by-step instruction for those hoping to identify the specific concerns of the microcosm of young people involved in a given religious youth program (Benson & Williams, 1987). At the opposite end of the spectrum is Search's The Troubled Journey: A Portrait of 6th-12th Grade Youth, a macroscopic view of developmental "deficits" and "assets" contributing to the growth and behavior of more than 46,000 teenagers (Benson, 1990). The study concludes that "the ability to nourish healthy children and adolescents requires the

support, involvement, and cooperation of multiple youth-serving sectors," including religious institutions. The study found that even among teenagers with multiple developmental deficits those reporting church or synagogue involvement also tended to report fewer at-risk behaviors (Benson, 1990). Studies such as these underscore a trend in current research which seeks to establish a relationship between the developmental needs of adolescents and subsequent religious programming.

Religiosity as a Factor in the Behavior of Youth

Many scholars, whose concerns include but are not limited to adolescents involved in religious communities, have examined the impact of religiosity on adolescent behavior <u>independent of</u> the religious community. The term "religiosity" refers to a scale which assesses religious belief and/or practice (Spilka, Hood & Gorsuch, 1985). Research on adolescent religiosity, which spans many disciplines and perspectives, points to the potential "preventative" power of religion, since it appears to provide a kind of "innoculation" for youth against antisocial behavior. One study of sixth through twelfth grade youth found that children who grow up in families where sexual abuse, physical abuse, parental addiction, or a single parent is present are more likely to engage in at-risk behavior than peers who grow up without these family difficulties; however, the few youth in the study living in such troubled environments, but reporting no at-risk behaviors, were about twice as likely to be involved in a church or a synagogue than their peers from troubled environments who reported at-risk behavior (Benson, 1990). In general, the research leading to these conclusions falls into four categories:

dimensions of religiosity, demographic variables and religiosity, relationships between religiosity and at risk adolescent behavior, and relationships between religiosity and prosocial adolescent behavior.

Dimensions of religiosity

Common religiosity scales in adolescent research include religious participation, (e.g., "How many times do you attend church/synagogue?") (Forliti & Benson, 1986; Sloane & Potvin, 1983); religious saliency (e.g., "How important are your religious beliefs in the conduct of your everyday activities?") (Hadaway, Elifson & Petersen, 1984; Sloane & Potvin, 1983); and religious belief (e.g., "God answers prayer"; "God really exists") (Sloane & Potvin, 1983; Hadaway et al., 1984). Only one study measured religiosity in terms of "faith maturity," that is, the congruence of professed beliefs and a lifestyle consistent with those beliefs (Search Institute, 1990). This latter definition is significant because it most nearly resembles the understanding of religious identity espoused by the churches it studied.

Regardless of how it is measured, religiosity appears to be at least moderately important to adolescents (Farel, 1982; Girl Scouts, 1989). A 1986 study asked young adolescents who said they belonged to a religious community to rank order twenty-four values: "To have God at the center of my life" ranked ninth and "To be a part of a church or synagogue" ranked fifteenth (Forliti & Benson, 1986). In Search Institute's 1990 study of more than 46,000 Midwest teenagers, 57 percent claimed involvement in a church or synagogue (Benson, 1990). The Girl Scouts Survey conducted in 1989 on "The Beliefs and Values of America's Children," which included a more geographically and racially

mixed sample than the Search study, found that 82 percent of the youth surveyed reported belief in God, and a large majority (71 percent) said they prayed once a week or more (Girl Scouts, 1990).

Variables and Adolescent Religiosity

Levels of religiosity differ according to gender, age, and geographic region and according to parental and peer religiosity. For instance, gender differences in adolescent religiosity have been reported in several studies. Adolescent girls consistently report greater religiosity both in terms of participation and belief (Forliti & Benson, 1986; Nelson & Potvin, 1981; Savin-Williams, 1977; Sloane & Potvin, 1983, 1986). Although more girls than boys professed religious belief, the orthodoxy of these beliefs does not vary significantly between males and females (Sloane & Potvin, 1983). Personality type does not seem to contribute significantly to adolescent religiosity, but high extraversion seems to be positively related to intrinsic religion, religious belief, and religious participation for girls but not for boys (Suziedelis & Potvin, 1981). In fact, the higher the degree of male sex role identification in a teenage boy, the less likely he is to demonstrate religiosity. For girls, sex role identification has no impact on religiosity (Suziedelis & Potvin, 1981).

Both religious participation and religious belief decrease with age (Forliti & Benson, 1986; Savin-Williams, 1977; Sloane & Potvin, 1983). Teenage boys' religiosity decreases faster than teenage girls' (Benson, Wood & Johnson, 1984). Even though religiosity decreases with age, adolescent religious participation <u>is</u> predictive of adult religious participation in those same persons (Thornton & Camburn,

1989; Willits & Crider, 1988, 1989).

In addition to gender and age, one's geographic region and denomination tend to affect religiosity. Not surprisingly, American teenagers in the south, the traditional "Bible Belt" of the U.S., report greater "personal faith," greater religious participation, and a higher degree of religious fundamentalism than adolescents in other parts of the United States (Nelsen & Potvin, 1981). All dimensions of religiosity, including "faith maturity," are less pronounced among teenagers affiliated with "mainline" churches than teenagers affiliated with more fundamentalist churches (Sloane & Potvin, 1983).

There is some evidence that peer religiosity may also influence adolescent religiosity (Hoge & Petrillo, 1979; Ozorak, 1989). The positive correlation between parents' religious participation and beliefs and the participation and beliefs of their adolescent children has been a consistent finding (Clark, Worthington, & Danser, 1988; Forliti & Benson, 1986; Hoge & Petrillo, 1979; Kieran & Munro, 1987; Nelson, 1980; Ozorak, 1989; Thornton & Camburn, 1989; Weigert & Thomas, 1972; Willits & Crider, 1988, 1989). Parents' general ability to affirm their teenager, in addition to whether or not they themselves are religious, may also be a significant positive indicator of adolescent religiosity (Dudley, 1978; Nelson, 1980; Nelson, 1981; Weigert & Thomas, 1978). Parental religious participation, however, only weakly predicts the future religious participation of their children once they become adults (Thornton & Camburn, 1989; Willits & Crider, 1988, 1989).

Religiosity and At-Risk Adolescent Behavior

Most of the research on religiosity and adolescence conducted in

the past decade has been devoted to the relationship between a teenager's religiosity and antisocial and/or high-risk behaviors, notably drug/alcohol use, sexual activity, and delinquency.[14] Although suicide attempts and dropping out of school are commonly studied at-risk behaviors (Dryfoos, 1990), they do not figure prominently in the research probing links between religiosity and behavior.

Relationships between religiosity and teenage drug and alcohol use have received much attention in the research of the past decade. This research consistently points to negative correlations between religiosity and adolescent drug/alcohol use; that is, the more religiosity a teenager reports, the less likely he or she is to take drugs or drink (Amoateng & Bahr, 1986; Cochran, 1986; Forliti & Benson, 1986; Hadaway, et al., 1984; Lorch & Hughes, 1985). With regard to alcohol, junior high and high school students reporting high religious salience and frequent church attendance say they are significantly more likely to refuse alcohol at a party where their friends were drinking than their counterparts reporting low religiosity (Girl Scouts, 198990). Among teenagers affiliated with fundamentalist churches, there is even less likelihood of alcohol use (Amoateng & Bahr, 1986; Hadaway et al., 1984; Lorch & Hughes, 1985). Still, teenagers who report religious affiliation are not immune from substance abuse. A recent study reported widespread drinking among adolescents from mainline denominations, beginning in the seventh grade; almost one-fourth (23 percent) of ninth and tenth graders in the study said that they drank alcohol six or more times in the last year, and more than one in ten (12 percent) reported binge drinking ("had five or more drinks in a row") three or more times in the last twelve months (Search Institute, 1990).

These findings generally parallel findings that associate adolescent religiosity with drug use. Religiosity consistently negatively correlates with "soft" drug use (Amoateng & Bahr, 1986; Cochran, 1988; Lorch & Hughes, 1985; McIntosh, et al., 1981), although religiosity is a relatively weak predictor of "hard" drug use (Hadaway et al., 1984; Lorch & Hughes, 1985; McIntosh et al., 1981). One study, however, found religiosity strongly related to non-use of "hard" drugs (Cochran, 1988). Because of the multiple variables affecting both religiosity and substance abuse, the degree to which religiosity alone predicts drug use is difficult to determine. Religiosity, family and peers may all interact to influence drug use, although there is some evidence that religiosity is still negatively related to drug use when other variables, such as environment and peer influence, are statistically controlled (Hadaway et al., 1984).

Sexual activity and religiosity is another relationship which concerns scholars, with a variety of studies demonstrating a negative correlation between religiosity and sexually permissive attitudes and behavior. Adolescents who attend church frequently and/or who value religion highly have the least permissive attitudes about sex (Girl Scouts, 1989; Miller & Olson, 1988; Thornton & Camburn, 1989; Studer & Thornton, 1987) and are the least sexually active (Forliti & Benson, 1986; Jessor, Costa, Jessor & Donovan, 1983; Miller & Bingham, 1989; Miller & Olson, 1988; Thornton & Camburn, 1989; Woodroof, 1985). Religious affiliation, however, while moderately predictive of low levels of sexual activity, does not provide "insurance" for a young person's chastity. In Search Institute's study of Christian education in six major Protestant denominations, 15% of ninth and

tenth graders reported having sexual intercourse once or more in their lifetime (Search Institute, 1990). According to one longitudinal study, there seems to be a reciprocal relationship between religiosity and permissive sexual attitudes and behaviors; that is, greater religiosity is likely to lead to less sexual permissiveness, while more sexual permissiveness leads to lower religiosity (Thornton & Camburn, 1989). Even though religious adolescents are less likely than their counterparts to be sexually active, when they <u>are</u> sexually active, one study found religious teenagers to be less likely to use contraceptives than their non-religious friends (Studer & Thornton, 1987), although evidence for this behavior is mixed (McCormick, Izzo & Folcik, 1985).

A third behavioral relationship receiving substantial attention in the literature is the relationship between religiosity and delinquency. Early studies failed to find religiosity related to adolescent antisocial behavior (Hirschi & Stark, 1969). Criticized for their methods (Burkett & White, 1974, Sloane & Potvin, 1986), these studies gave rise to recent research efforts designed to improve the methods of earlier findings. In the process, researchers found frequent religious participation and high religious salience to result in less frequent antisocial behavior such as truancy, drug use, major and minor theft, trespassing, property damage, fights, and weapon use.[15]

Religiosity does not appear to be related to lower delinquent behavior in studies that control for peer and family influence (Elifson, Peterson & Hadaway, 1983). However, the relationship between adolescent religiosity and delinquency, as it may be affected by family and peers, has not been investigated. As Elifson, et al. suggest, religiosity might not have shown a unique effect on delin-

quency because "religion may be acting as an antecedent influence that helps create a family and peer environment not conducive to delinquent behavior" (Elifson, Peterson & Hadaway, 1983, p. 524).

Research has not specifically addressed the relationship between suicide and religiosity among adolescents. Of the research that has been done with the adult population, religiosity appears to be inversely related to national suicide rates even when other factors are controlled (Stacks, 1983). However, one study found that church-going youth still show some suicidal tendencies. Nearly half of all adolescents surveyed, 47 percent of ninth and tenth graders and 44 percent of youth in grades eleven and twelve, said that they had thought about committing suicide at least once in the last year (Search Institute, 1990).

Religiosity and Prosocial Behavior

The role of religion as an impetus toward prosocial behavior has more often been an assumption than a finding of the research itself. Where prosocial behavior is expressly mentioned, it is assigned an active dimension, such as "altruism," or attitudes and behaviors which help others. Although the research reviewed here did not directly address the relationship between adolescent religiosity and altruism, it does suggest that the more religious participation, salience, and orthodoxy is professed by an adolescent, the more likely he or she is to participate in helping behaviors.

The published literature is cautious about claiming a causal relationship between religiosity and prosocial behaviors. Arguing that prosocial behavior may actually reduce the tendency to make risky choices, a recent Search Institute study found that students who

engage in altruistic behavior on a weekly basis are less likely than non-helpers to report frequent or binge drinking, tobacco use, drug use, sexual activity, depression/suicide attempts, antisocial behavior, desire to quit school, reckless driving, or eating disorders (Benson, 1990).

The Girl Scout survey, unique in that it claims that youth are governed by various "moral compasses," or sources of authority for moral decisions, found that adolescents basing moral decisions upon religious authority were more willing to engage in altruistic behavior than youth of most other moral orientations. Black and Hispanic youth, growing up in ethnic communities where the church is a pronounced part of the culture, reported more altruism than white youth. However, the study concluded that the determining factor in the relationship between religiosity and an adolescent's worldview is not the religion itself but the intensity of religious faith (Girl Scouts, 1989).

Jewish youth exhibit similar tendencies toward altruism; as one Jewish author observed, "Where there is no bread, there is no Torah" (Huberman, 1988, p. 307). While a recent survey of Jewish teenagers found their highest priorities to be inner-directed (e.g., "concern about looks and appearance"), interest in the welfare of others also ranked in their top ten priorities (Haas & Newlon, 1990) a pattern analogous to a similar study of Christian adolescents (Benson, et al., 1987). These patterns of altruism, if not caused by religious communities, are at least consistent with their teachings.

The significance of the relationship between religiosity and prosocial behavior is well summarized in Search Institute's portrait of adolescents in grades six through twelve (Benson, 1990). Noting

that involvement in a church or synagogue is one of many possible "assets" to adolescent development because it assists in the structured use of time and positive value development, the study concludes that adolescents who ultimately "thrive" are much more likely to be connected to adult-led, structured youth programs such as those offered by a church or school, and to be connected to a variety of systems of support, e.g. a community organization, church, or synagogue, in addition to a strong family. These connections apparently help compensate for developmental deficits, such as social isolation, negative peer pressure, and/or physical or sexual abuse, which the adolescent may experience. "The point is this," concludes the study. "Deficits are not destiny. With the right configuration of external and internal assets, the potential negative effects of adversity can be neutralized" (Benson, 1990, p. 78).

Gaps in the Printed Literature

The diverse literature concerning religious communities' programmatic responses to youth provides, if not a solid foundation for religious youth programs, at least some evidence of the potential value of practices and beliefs which religious youth programs promote. The research also contains some gaps which must be filled if religious youth programs' service to adolescents is to improve.

First, there is little cross-fertilization between the disciplines of religious education and the social/behavioral sciences. Both of these fields are vastly interested in the well-being of the adolescent, and both spend substantial energy trying to understand the relationship between adolescence and religion. The application of "religiosity" to the religious community is unclear, and its useful-

ness to practitioners is limited. At the same time, the usefulness of religious educational theory is restricted to religious institutions unless it can address the religiosity of adolescents outside the religious community as well. While dozens of manuals and magazines are available to the practitioner looking for program ideas, management tips, and philosophical ballast, collaboration between those generating theory in religious education and those conducting research on religiosity is rare.

Second, very little has been written on the religious development of young adolescents, despite the increasing recognition that young adolescence requires specific attention from religious communities (Farel, 1982). Program responses tend to treat young adolescents as "total" people, but do they address those needs which may be specifically "religious?" For example, is religious experience a developmental need of young adolescents, or is it merely a component of identity formation? In addition, most philosophical as well as empirical research fails to distinguish between young and older adolescents. Even studies that analyze adolescent needs and program responses tend to view all adolescents as "youth." The philosophical contexts of religious education offer no frameworks for the religious education of young adolescents per se; the appropriate response of religious communities during the developmental changes in religious belief and behavior between young and older adolescence has not yet been systematically explored.

Another gap in the literature is a lack of consensus in definitions of religion, faith, and religiosity. For example, "religiosity" is measured by religious participation, importance, and belief. This does not typically describe the dynamic religious communities un-

derstand as faith. Furthermore, terms like "religious education" have varying connotations even among experts; for some it is a formal process independent of more "informal" methods of community experience. In the Jewish community, even the term "informal" education is variously received, with some using the terms "supplementary" or "alternative" education to avoid a stigma often attached to the word "informal" in Jewish educational efforts (Kilstein, 1991).

Yet another significant gap is the underrepresentation of ethnic youth, both in the samples used for empirical research and in the concerns of philosophical literature. Most empirical studies to date have used primarily white, Protestant, middle-class samples. Culturally-specific religious education literature is rare;[16] where it does exist, it is usually written only in English and presented from an Anglo-American perspective (Elizondo, 1990). As the cultural pluralism of the United States continues to grow, this resource vacuum is widening rapidly.

Omitted, also, from religious education theory is the at-risk adolescent, a reflection of this teenager's omission from religious youth work as a whole. Although periodic articles arise in popular resources on subjects such as "drinking and your youth group" and "crisis intervention," virtually nothing is known from research about the relationship between at-risk youth and religious communities, or about why at-risk behavior persists in some religious adolescents but not in others. Since much of the research on at-risk behavior points to its prevalence--or at least its potential prevalence--in all youth, learning how and why religious institutions seem to "innoculate" youth against such choices is a matter of some urgency. What, specifically,

do religious communities inculcate that results in more self-control? Guilt? Obedience? Conformity? Wholesome ways to spend discretionary time? Do religious communities instill a deeper sense of self respect than other affiliations? And, if youth affiliated with religious youth programs do tend towards healthier choices, are they happier than their at-risk friends? While positive correlations between religiosity and prosocial behavior do exist, researchers do not understand the causalities involved. What differences would longitudinal studies find in the at-risk behavior of religious versus non-religious populations?

Finally, subtle relationships between factors which influence religiosity often go unnoticed. For instance, is it the family's identity as a religious family, or the religion's influence on family identity, which defines a sexually permissive attitude? Does religiosity indirectly affect drug use because church involvement may result in a peer group of non-users, thereby reducing members' chances of using drugs, or is it the other way around? The issues are complex and intermingled; future research can productively examine the interrelationships of variables affecting religiosity in teenagers.

A DESCRIPTIVE OVERVIEW OF RELIGIOUS YOUTH PROGRAMS IN THE UNITED STATES

If a review of the relevant printed research on religious youth programs and American young adolescents reveals a scattered body of literature, information about the programs themselves is even more untamed. The field of religious youth work is largely without boundaries; any effort to synthesize information is likely to omit aspects of this work which properly could be included. The following pages, however, represent one effort to trace consistent themes in the work of many different religious communities in terms of their status, basic goals and assumptions, methods of delivery, leadership, funding, and strengths and challenges.

The Status of Religious Youth Programs

Religious youth work is at a crossroads in American Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish communities. On the one hand, these communities are serving adolescents in more ways than ever before; on the other hand, fewer adolescents are actively involved in the corporate life of the religious community than a generation ago (Barna, 1990). For many religious communities, the 1990s signal an era of massive cuts in the money, time, and personnel allocated to religious youth work. Mainline Protestant churches, the originators of the religious youth program, have experienced a steady decline in the past three decades; young people in particular have left the mainline Protestant fold (Osmer, 1989). During this same period, conservative evangelical youth ministry has experienced moderate growth which has begun to stabilize (Carotta, 1990). In the 1980s, American Catholics--relative

newcomers to youth ministry per se despite the Roman Catholic Church's historic commitment to religious education and Catholic charities--caught up with and in many places surpassed Protestants in their commitment to, and investment in, youth ministry, although presently Catholics are also experiencing major reductions in funding and personnel for youth work. Funding, support, and participation in Jewish youth work has remained relatively stable during the past decade although "low participation levels" are still considered a problem (Plutzer, 1991).

Explanations for these divergent patterns vary. In mainline Protestant churches, rhetorical support of religious youth work is strong, but budget allocations have not kept pace with rising costs. In the Episcopal Church, for example, a churchwide endorsement of the importance of Christian education was adopted in 1988, and a successful national youth event garnered publicity for the Episcopalian leadership's commitment to young people. But, points out Sheryl Kujawa, denominational staff person for youth ministry in the Episcopal Church, the national budget for youth ministry has remained the same for ten years. "In a certain sense," says Kujawa, "to be mainline Protestant is a death wish. All elected officials [in the church] say they like children, but the money, time, and support is not there. Resources have not kept pace with demand. We have good participation, but our budgets insure mediocrity" (Kujawa, 1991).

Evangelical Protestants, on the other hand, experienced a growth in membership in the past two decades, and budgets and staff commitments to youth work remained stable or increased slightly during that period. For instance, funding for Southern Baptist Sunday Schools,

which comprise the basic delivery system for Southern Baptist youth work, as well as the number of staff persons available to youth per capita have increased in recent years (Roberto, 1991; Ross, 1990; Day, 1990). Richard Ross of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board believes that part of this stability may be attributed to the fact that Southern Baptists, "unlike mainline churches in the 1960s and 1970s, did not move in the direction of viewing teenagers as fully functioning adults in the church. We respect teenagers profoundly," says Ross. "But they need a different type of program than adults. That [age-level appropriate] programming helped us a lot in the past twenty years" (Ross, 1990). John Roberto, director of the Catholic-based Center for Youth Ministry Development which conducts training seminars for youth ministers, adds that the high quality of training expected of--and provided for-- Catholic youth ministers and volunteers helps account for Catholics' strong youth ministry performance in the past decade (Roberto, 1991).

While the general pattern of evangelical Protestant youth ministry in the past decade has been one of expansion, evangelical parachurch groups have struggled to maintain levels of funding and participation primarily because they do not benefit from congregational budgets or membership bases which place a second-generation of church members' tithes and children at their disposal (Carotta, 1990). Youth for Christ's Rodger Cross observed that "we have more churches participating, but we have to work harder for every dollar" (Cross, 1990). Fellowship of Christian Athletes director Roy Moran noted that since independent religious youth organizations do their own fundraising, their financial stability tends to mirror the national economy. Pointing to recent budgetary constraints facing the Fellowship of

Christian Athletes, Moran said: "Our funding was increasing until we put troops in Iraq; since then it has decreased. Fortunately, funding is not an issue in starting a local [Fellowship of Christian Athletes] chapter" (Moran, 1990).

Recent cuts in staff and budgets have alarmed Catholic youth ministers, but Roman Catholic youth work is still experiencing the benefits of explosive growth during the 1980s. Many factors contributed to this growth, not the least of which was "a sense of urgency and desperation" from Catholic adults who saw decreasing numbers of youth attending Catholic churches and youth groups (Roberto, 1991). This desperation spurred a grass roots initiative to unify Roman Catholic youth work, a vision articulated officially in the National Conference of Catholic Bishops' 1976 "Vision Statement" for youth ministry. By the 1980's, observes Roberto, standardized training in youth ministry became valued and youth work began to "decentralize" as its emphasis shifted from the diocesan to the parish level. "Today," says Roberto, "we are having lots of cutbacks in money and personnel. But still the Roman Catholic Church is spending more money on youth than ever before. The difference is that most of it is now being spent on the parish level, where there is an increased level of professionalism and length of tenure among youth ministers" (Roberto, 1991).

While leaders in Jewish religious youth movements tend to describe the condition of these organizations as "stable," they are guarded as they do so. On the one hand, more resources are being allocated for religious youth programs in the Jewish community than ever before. While Jewish supplementary schools (mid-week, afternoon,

once-a-week) dropped by 52 percent between 1962 and 1986, Jewish day schools doubled in size (Huberman, 1988). Yet membership in synagogue-based youth movements, whose membership is larger than the independent youth movements, has declined in the past decade for reasons that are not altogether clear (Plutzer, 1991). Still, funding for informal Jewish education is at low ebb and qualified youth workers are difficult to recruit due to low salaries in all areas of Jewish youth leadership (Rosenzwieg, 1991). Most of the time, what these leaders mean by the "stable" situation of Jewish youth movements is that funding and personnel are inadequate, but they do not appear to be decreasing further at this time (Elad, 1991).

In particular, the American Jewish community's efforts to settle Soviet Jewish immigrants in Israel and the U.S. have strained financial resources normally available to youth movements and other program agencies, although Jewish youth leaders are quick to point out the ways in which American Jewish youth programs share in the commitment to integrate Soviet teenagers into American Jewish life (Melzer, 1991; Shanky, 1991). New trends in informal education and outreach are increasing the amount of training available to, and the degree of commitment from, volunteer religious youth workers (Kilstein, 1991); but in general, staff persons in Jewish youth movements are cautious when they describe the status of Jewish religious youth work. While the programs are plentiful, funding and personnel problems severely limit their ability to address the needs of many Jewish young people.

Goals and Assumptions of Religious Youth Work

Despite the diversity of theologies, polities, histories, and programs which inform the religious youth work of the 1990s, religious

youth programs share remarkably similar goals and assumptions which, while often unspoken, direct their work with adolescents. On the one hand, these programs set out to instill in adolescents a clear cultural and faith identity, an identity which will lead them to become contributing members to the religious community itself. On the other hand, these programs assume the need to envelop young people, usually their own, in a caring community that will facilitate adolescent development and see them safely into adulthood as mature, productive members of society. Religious youth programs exist in the tension between these two goals.

The Goal of Cultural/Faith Identity

The degree to which a program leans more toward cultural or faith identity is a matter of theology and ethnicity, but all religious youth work, to some extent, affirms both of these objectives. Anglo-Protestant youth work, for example, tends to articulate ownership of faith as part of its mission, but seldom mentions a need for cultural affirmation; in practice, except for extremely conservative, sect-like groups, white Protestant youth programs seek to help youth live within the dominant culture more than they seek to create a counter-cultural identity for youth (Rasmussen, 1990; Warren, 1990). A faith community is viewed as a voluntary association, and much religious youth work is aimed at eliciting a teenager's commitment to "join" such a community. In general, the more conservative and evangelical the organization, the more its goals are focused on joining as a means to faith identity; the more mainline the group, the more its goals stress lifestyle within the dominant culture as evidence of faith identity.

In Roman Catholic youth work, lines between faith and cultural

identity are somewhat more blurred. Catholics, more so than Protestants, have historically understood themselves to be distinct subculture within the dominant American culture. It is this self-understanding, in fact, which gave rise to Catholic parochial education in the nineteenth century when public education became institutionalized as the bearer of Protestant as well as American values. Catholic theology views religious identity as more than a voluntary association; mass, for instance, is considered an obligation, not a choice. A great deal of emphasis is placed on community practices which make one "Catholic"; one is admitted at confirmation, not only to the Catholic church, but to "Catholic life." Catholic youth ministry self-consciously strives to communicate, not only how to be Christian, but how to be a Catholic, a faith identity with definite cultural implications which impinge upon marriage, family, and lifestyle decisions.

Ethnic Christian communities are even more explicit about the connection between cultural and faith identity as a goal of youth ministry. In most ethnic communities, inherent in one's cultural ethos is a self-conscious spirituality. In interviews conducted for this project, ethnic religious youth leaders stressed the relationship between ethnic identity and spirituality: "African Americans by nature are spiritual people" (Crawford, 1991); "Asian/Pacific American youth have a different history; they were not pilgrims or Puritans, they have a different theological point of view, and different sets of values based on this" (Ng, 1991); "The Hispanic people place a strong emphasis on the spiritual side [of issues]" (Elizondo, 1990). Perspectives like these lead most ethnic Christian communities to

recognize religious identity as central to their cultural fabric. Consequently, ethnic Christian youth programs intentionally teach religiosity as a part of being ethnic (Soaries, 1990).

The greatest fusion between cultural and faith identity is found in Jewish youth work, which readily identifies cultural affirmation and survival as the primary goals of youth work. Sandra Kilstein of the Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York makes the point directly: "The goal [of Jewish youth work] is to keep Jewish youth Jewish" (Kilstein, 1991). Making a connection between a Jewish youth and a local synagogue is far less important to most Jewish youth movements than it is for Christian youth ministries which consciously connect teenagers with local churches. The reason is simple: a teenager's Jewishness does not depend upon synagogue-affiliation. The fact that the Jewish community regards Jews as a people, not as a religion, has profound implications on what is construed as "religious" youth work in the Jewish community (Elad, 1991). The fusion of the goals of cultural/faith identity constitutes "a real ambiguity in what constitutes a religious youth program," says David Frank, denominational staff for the North American Federation of Temple Youth. "That ambiguity is an authentic and essential component of American Jewish life; it is very difficult to separate religious from cultural phenomena. It really comes down to a very difficult discussion that is at the heart of the difference between Jewish communities and other kinds of religious communities" (Frank, 1991). For this reason, Zionist youth movements, community-based youth movements, synagogue-based youth movements, and youth work in Jewish Community Centers are all understood to be religious youth work even though relatively little emphasis may be placed on religious practice. While a few

Jewish youth organizations do identify themselves as "secular," the vast majority make no attempt to distinguish Jewish faith from Jewish culture (Kastner, 1991).

The need to pass on cultural and faith identity in all of these religious communities is at least partly motivated by their conviction that survival depends upon creating new leaders who will carry this identity into each succeeding generation. This expectation is typical of all entities which function as "communities"; as John Gardner has written, "Any community that seeks to ensure its continued vitality will not only enable [its] young people to develop to the full, but will prepare them for their future roles, instilling the shared values, fostering commitment to shared purposes, and teaching them to preserve and renew the common heritage" (Gardner, 1991, p. 29). Without religious youth work, the religious community's future is jeopardized. Although leaders in religious youth work struggle to persuade congregations that teenagers are the "church/synagogue of today" as well as the "church/synagogue of tomorrow," the religious community as a whole is far more concerned about the "church/synagogue of tomorrow" which they themselves cannot ensure. Consequently, religious youth work is often viewed as a means of institutional security, an assurance that, a generation hence, someone will be there to carry on the religious tradition.

The Goal of Healthy Adolescent Development

The goal of healthy adolescent development, as well as cultural/faith identity, is also highly esteemed by religious youth leaders. Admittedly, this objective is not uniquely sought by religious communities. Yet concern for an adolescent's total well-being

is often what religious youth leaders cite first when discussing the "unique" contributions of religious youth work to a teenager's development. Judeo-Christian tradition teaches that the entire person is created "in God's image," and that the religious community affirms the sanctity of God's creation. Those interviewed for this project were universally agreed that there is intrinsic merit in a youth program which is self-consciously "religious." Yet when asked what unique contributions religious youth programs made to an adolescent's well-being, respondents frequently reported "positive self-esteem," "a sense of community," and "fostering an other-centered worldview." Clearly, the goals of cultural/faith identity and the goals of healthy adolescent development are extremely interconnected in the mind of the religious community.

The goal of healthy adolescent development is linked to several underlying assumptions that religious communities share about religious youth work. One of these assumptions is that spiritual identity, if not insurance for "the good life," is at least some measure of protection against a "bad life." Most religious communities do not interpret religious teaching as a shield against hardship; but the values communicated through the consensus and care of a community are believed to "innoculate" teenagers against the odds in terms of at-risk behavior. Research on religiosity supports this assumption to some degree. The religious community interprets this to mean that it is not only the teenager's soul that is at stake; it is his or her health and well-being emotionally, socially, and physically as well.

A second assumption underlying the religious communities' concern for adolescent development is a tacit belief that "religious

experience" is, in itself, a fundamental developmental need of adolescents (Carotta, 1990). So far, this assumption is unsubstantiated by research: "It's not that we're saying religious experience isn't a developmental need of adolescence," points out Peter Scales of the Center for Early Adolescence. "It may be. It's just that, as far as we know, the research to date has not demonstrated this. More research should be done in this area" (Scales, 1990). Non-religious organizations interested in adolescent development tend to understand religious experience to be significant to the extent that it contributes to identity formation, perhaps the fundamental adolescent need, which has been well-established by research since Erik Erikson's treatment of the subject (Erikson, 1968).

Religious communities are apt to view the situation differently. Whereas developmental psychology suggests that the major arenas of identity formation include selecting and preparing for a future career, working out a political ideology, adopting a set of social roles, and reevaluating religious and moral beliefs (Harter, 1990), Jewish and Christian theology suggest that this last arena is preeminent. The religious community sees more at stake in religious experience than merely helping an adolescent claim part of her identity; religious experience, says the religious youth worker, is the crucial piece of an adolescent's identity. When a person goes off to "find herself," according to religious teaching, what she is really looking for is her spiritual being, the essence of her existence, which is rooted in her relationship with God. Focusing one's identity on anything or anyone else is simply a temporary, unsatisfactory substitute for one's real need to understand oneself as a child of God. The justification for religious youth work follows naturally, then. If,

in fact, adolescence is the most critical period for identity formation, and if identity formation is primarily a matter of spiritual self-definition, then religious work with youth is important to the healthy development of human beings.

A third underlying assumption is the religious community's belief that the support of a caring community is crucial to one's health and well-being, an assumption which has also received some support from the literature (Benson, 1990). Indeed, the mission of religious communities is to care for the world, including young persons. Religious youth programs offer the gift of a religious community, a "belonging place" which is uniquely powerful because, unlike most adolescent associations, one does not outgrow belonging there, nor does one stop belonging when one moves to another part of the country. Both Christians and Jews understand themselves to belong to a universal community that transcends specific local congregations. The experience of "connectedness" is not merely a spiritual phenomenon; it translates into caring for the entire community with which one is connected. The experience of this caring, and of being cared for, is not only essential to Jewish and Christian life; it is crucial to the experience of personhood (Martinson, 1991).

Delivery Systems in Religious Youth Work

Structures in Religious Youth Programs

What nearly all religious youth programs have in common, then, is a structure which facilitates the formation of a significant community for adolescents. These structures have identifiable, if permeable, boundaries and functions, and they assist the overall structure of the

religious community in providing youth with "a set of believable and attainable expectations and standards from the community to guide the movement from child to adult status" (Ianni, 1989). The structures which can contribute to community among adolescents are limitless, but consistent patterns surface in Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish youth programs.

Youth groups

By far the most common structure is the "youth group," a club-like gathering of young people who typically meet for socializing, study, community service, and worship experiences together. While this form is the basic unit of almost all denominational youth programs among both Christians and Jews, it also describes the basic unit of parachurch organizations and community-based independent Jewish youth organizations like B'nai B'rith.

Formal instruction

Sometimes the youth group is adapted to more formal settings for the purposes of instruction. In these contexts the relationship-centered process is still primary but it is altered in order to accomplish a task such as learning music for a youth choir, mastering Biblical knowledge in Sunday School, learning Hebrew in Hebrew school. Sometimes formal instruction is the primary vehicle for reaching adolescents as is true for Southern Baptists who rely on Sunday school as the primary form of adolescent community. Most religious traditions utilize this form to prepare youth for official "membership" rites of passage into the adult religious community (e.g., Hebrew school, confirmation). An unintended problem accompanies this form for religious communities. Among both Christian and Jewish youth,

participation in religious youth programs drops significantly immediately following the age of confirmation or bar/bat mitzvah (Kilstein, 1991; Martinson, 1991). Perhaps because this structure mimics adolescents' school experience, or perhaps because subsequent programs into which youth can be funneled after the rite of passage are lacking, youth often view participation in formal instruction as a path to "graduation" from church or synagogue, instead of using the rite of passage as a beginning of an intensified commitment to the religious community.

Worship

Sometimes the basic structure for forming a significant community for adolescents is the intergenerational context of worship. This structure is highly visible in ethnic religious youth programs, and sometimes is productively used by small congregations who, by virtue of their size, are able to relate to adolescents as individuals instead of as a group. In places where this is a conscious strategy, adolescents tend to be integrally involved in all aspects of corporate worship, including leadership roles.

Ironically, many religious youth programs tend to exclude worship from what they consider youth work; when asked how many hours young people in their denomination devoted to religious youth programs, most denominational leaders excluded the worship hour from their calculations. The exceptions were Baptist denominational leaders and leaders of ethnic religious communities; in these settings, worship nearly always "counted" as part of a young person's time in religious youth work (Blackwell, 1991; Day, 1990; Mack, 1991; Ng, 1991). Christian educators stress the importance of worship as a structure in religious

youth work and argue for its preeminence in youth programming (Little, 1968; Maas, 1990; Myers, 1987); Jewish religious youth leaders, while valuing adolescent involvement in the synagogue, place far less emphasis on worship as a structure for youth programming.

Residential experiences

One of the most powerful community structures in religious youth programs is widely believed to be the residential experience, a religious camp, conference, or retreat which places youth in a supervised residential setting with other teenagers for a weekend or longer. Residential religious youth programs offer a particularly intensive community experience; the relationship potential is so high that these programs often productively involve teenagers who do not normally affiliate with the sponsoring religious body. Virtually all religious communities sponsor some version of residential programming, and many offer them at local, regional, and national levels. In fact, the most commonly cited structure for youth work through national agencies is the "youth event," mass gatherings of adolescents who come together for fun and celebration of their religious tradition.

It is the intensive sense of community which makes residential youth activities so formative, says Asher Melzer, director of camping for the United Jewish Association/Federation. "The Jewish camp is the most potent expression of Jewishness most teenagers ever experience," he observes (Melzer, 1991). Indeed, the experience of community is so powerful that merely sharing it with other Christians or Jews implicitly makes it a "Christian" or a "Jewish" experience, even if the camp is not explicitly devoted to religious concerns.

Many camps and retreats are devoted to addressing special needs--

mentally-retarded teenagers, AIDS awareness, "fresh air" camps for low income urban youth--and make worship part of the week's schedule but do not explicitly advocate an adolescent's relationship with God. Nonetheless, participants in these settings often report positive spiritual experiences similar to, albeit less intense than, Catholic teenagers attending a "Teenagers Encounter Christ" weekend, a Catholic retreat ministry which encourages Catholic teenagers to intentionally explore their relationship with Jesus Christ. For Jewish youth, an even more provocative residential experience is emphasized as the pinnacle of all religious youth work: the trip to Israel, sponsored in some form by virtually every Jewish-affiliated youth organization in the U.S. and available to youth from age thirteen through young adulthood. "Nothing is more crucial to Jewish identity than spending time in Israel," affirms Sandra Kilstein of the Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York. "It is a very emotional experience for a Jewish teenager to walk on Biblical soil, to feel the continuity of his people" (Kilstein, 1991).

Youth leadership development

Yet another form of adolescent community engendered by religious youth programs may be described as "leadership development," intentional efforts by the parent organization to develop a strong corps of youth leaders not only for the purpose of leading the religious youth program, but also to serve as future leaders within the religious community itself. These forms may consist of local parish youth councils, regional/national bodies of elected youth representatives, or any number of forms which draw student leaders together. Although parachurch groups tend to rely on adult leadership on behalf of youth,

most religious communities believe the ideal is "co-leadership" between youth and adults at all levels in the religious youth program. This structure is especially appealing to national denominational offices. The Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., for instance, is in the process of establishing a denominational representative council for youth leadership, both because it helps effectively implement youth programming, and because it will train future leaders in the structures of the church. Sometimes these youth councils serve as coordinating bodies for youth leadership from several related religious youth agencies; such is the case with the American Zionist Youth Foundation youth council and various youth projects sponsored by the National Council of Churches. While adolescents in religious youth groups devote between two and four hours weekly to the program (including the worship hour), teenagers involved in leadership structures of religious youth programs may spend more than ten hours a week on religious youth-related activities.

Community service

One structure for religious youth work gaining momentum in the 1990s is teen community service. Today's religious youth leaders are adamant that religious identity among youth emphasize the value of service to others. The 1980s saw a surge in the number of youth service projects, social justice opportunities, and "work camps" available to high school students; community service structures tend to be less available to young adolescents. Service opportunities are extremely popular among youth; despite the work involved, they offer adolescents real challenges, as well as the crucial experience of a community based on teamwork and a common mission. Participants in

these activities are enthusiastic about the benefits of hands-on service and cultural confrontation, especially for white middle class youth, the largest demographic category tapped by religious youth programs.

Jewish Community Centers

One structure uniquely available to Jewish teenagers is the Jewish Community Center. Jewish Community Centers are aptly named: they stand at the center of the Jewish community to bring together Jews, regardless of synagogue-affiliation, for the purpose of promoting Jewish culture and interaction with other Jews. In terms of youth work, their goal is to bring Jewish teenagers into contact with other Jewish teenagers. Jewish youth work makes any activity Jewish by sharing them with other Jews; as one denominational leader put it, "If two Jews are playing ping pong, then ping pong is a Jewish game" (Frank, 1990). This understanding makes Jewish Community Centers, unlike YMCAs and YWCAs, key players in Jewish religious work with teenagers.

Jewish Community Centers view their role in the Jewish community as assisting in the "Jewish mission of the transmission of values, education, and culture" (Rosenzwieg, 1991). Trained teen workers are employed to develop relationships with, and programs for, adolescents who visit the Center. The Jewish Community Center also serves as a significant tool for maintaining contact with Jewish youth following their bar/bat mitzvahs, when many Jewish youth drop out of synagogue life (Plutzer, 1991). "The Jewish Community Center can be a relief for kids after their bar mitzvah because there is less religiosity associated with it" (Rosenzwieg, 1991). Levels of religiosity not-

withstanding, providing youth with a context in which they can associate with other Jews promotes and strengthens their identification with corporate "Jewishness," an important aspect of Jewish life.

Adult-youth relationships

The one structure for religious youth work which overpowers all others in its ability to impact teenagers, however, is the significant adult-youth relationship (Yaconelli, 1990; Borman, 1990). Sometimes these relationships result from assistance sought through formal structures. For example, a church may sponsor a Family Life Center which makes counselors available to troubled youth (Gregory, 1984). More often, however, these bonds are formed in the day-to-day interactions between adult youth leaders and teenagers, and this relationship precedes special interventions on behalf of the adolescent such as suicide intervention, vocational guidance, and spiritual direction. Often the bond between the adult leader and a teenager is formed without any formal intervention taking place. The time spent in one-on-one conversation with a teenager, even in the midst of a larger group, is significant. Nearly all religious youth leaders share experiences with adolescents whose presence is hardly noticed at the youth group or the retreat; yet years later that teenager will testify that the bond he perceived between himself and the adult counselor has had a tremendous influence on his life. Religious youth leaders view all other forms of religious youth communities as vehicles to this primary form, the relationship between youth and the adults who work with them.

Educational Content and Process

Religious youth programs tend to reside in the context of "religious education," which is generally understood to encompass two kinds of settings. Formal settings, such as Sunday school and Hebrew school, emphasize content mastery; informal settings, such as youth groups, camps, and recreational programs, stress relationships and group exprience over content mastery. All religious youth programs focus in some manner on content intended to instill both spiritual and social awareness; a teenager imbued with a cultural/faith identity inevitably works for a more just society. Religious youth programs find that when teenagers are engaged in relationships with people whose lives bear witness to this awareness, they are more likely to adopt it for themselves than when it is communicated to them didactically. A truism of religious youth work is that "programs do not teach--people do."

In particular, the relationship between youth and a trusted adult is considered formative (Borman, 1990; Yaconelli, 1990). Sometimes these relationships evolve out of formal contexts such as liturgy or confirmation class, but more often youth-adult connections are forged spontaneously in the fluid, informal contexts designed to facilitate adult "presence" with youth. Religious youth programming, then, succeeds to the extent that it fosters "positive connections" between adolescents and significant adults, peers, the religious community, and God. Governing this relationship-centered process is the assumption that relationships can change people, and that positive adolescent development can be nourished by incubation in a caring community. Religious youth programs serve as such incubators, providing youth with an environment which maximizes the possibility of

healthy development not only spiritually, but socially, emotionally, and morally as well.

Models of Religious Youth Programs

The model of the program's delivery system is based on the configurations that these various forms of community and educational processes take on in a given context. Models are often subconsciously selected packages of program options which may or may not cohere into an effective strategy for achieving the goals of religious youth work. In practitioners' literature, models are often presented as discrete forms of youth work; for example, "models of confirmation" and "retreat models" are popular exemplars of religious youth work described in popular literature for the benefit of youth workers.

For the purposes of this discussion, however, the term "model" is used to describe a broader phenomenon: the overarching shape of the delivery system for youth services in a given religious community. This understanding views the model as the umbrella under which discrete forms of youth work operate. Such models are often subconsciously adopted, growing out of religious communities' self-understandings, and for this reason they are difficult to alter: change would threaten the identity of the parent organization, as well as the religious youth program itself. As William Myers of Chicago Theological Seminary points out, "The historic reasons for a certain tradition's use of a particular model [of youth work] are deeply imbedded within our cultural psyche and are not always readily available for a congregation's (or a denomination's) critical reflection" (Myers, 1991b, p. 3).

White mainline Protestant religious communities are especially

vulnerable to cultural collusion, since they tend to assume that their religious youth programs will imbue adolescents with the values and benefits of the "dominant" white and Protestant American culture. But Myers articulates the concern of many religious youth leaders when he observes:

> Given the pluralism of our country . . . [these youth ministry programs] no longer have the luxury of assuming a dominant posture within our culture. The normative model therefore falls flat on its face, and older youth leave the church in droves. But most churches haven't recognized or connected this fact to their model (Myers, 1991b, p. 4).

As a result, Myers explains, traditionally religious rites like confirmaion, which once conferred one's legal as well as religious identity in society, are today relatively meaningless to both culture and religious community. These communities cannot critique their own youth programs' role in this irrelevance simply because they too have been co-opted by culture. "In many respects," concludes Myers, "the problem of youth ministry in the mainline denominational church is that it cannot articulate a convincing identity in relationship to culture" (Myers, 1991b., p. 5). Multicultural models of religious youth work, on the other hand, and those designed to imbue a distinctly "religious" identity, have more success critiquing their relationship with the surrounding culture, and operating as an alternative to it.

In the interviews conducted for this report, effective religious youth programs tended to take one of four shapes which overlap at points, but which nonetheless represent distinct understandings of the ways in which religious youth work accomplishes its goals: midwifery/adoption models, team models, kinship models, and corporate/consumer models.

Midwifery/adoption models

The midwifery/adoption model has been articulated by Dr. Jack Nelson of Fordham University and finds ready adherents in Catholic communities (Carotta, 1990), although it aptly describes many religious youth programs elsewhere. This model views faith as a dormant gift in each young person, who needs to give birth to that faith and foster its development to maturity. In the midwifery/adoption model, the church is the family adopting both the young person and her faith during this process. In these communities, youth are all "pregnant" with faith and the objective of religious youth work is to provide the appropriate care to teenagers both before and after this faith emerges. In Roman Catholic communities, for example, where this model is prevalent, parochial schools are available to steep the young person in the religious communities' care. Adult youth leaders are implicitly identified in the community as "midwives" for these young persons' faith; the pastor is engaged, if not directly with youth, with their birthing process. In practice, the midwifery/adoption model lends itself to very broad interpretations of religious youth work, since it overtly directs some of its efforts toward teenagers who have claimed neither faith nor a "faith family." For example, the interest in caring for teenagers before they claim faith has helped motivate a huge network of Catholic charities available to young people who are not necessarily Catholic themselves. The nature of such a community's care tends towards the wholistic health of the teenager rather than proselytizing; if the "pregnant" youth is well-cared for, the "newborn" faith is likely to be healthy as well, and will emerge when the time is right.

Team models

The team model resembles the process of sending a chain letter: a caring charismatic adult, perhaps a pastor, usually starts the process by working with other caring adults, who in turn work with youth who learn to become envoys of caring to their own spheres. This model views faith as "contagious": a teenager "catches" faith when she is around others who "have" it, and the goal is to give every youth ample opportunity to become "infected." Culturally, this model reflects the influence of team management strategies in the corporate world, especially in its emphasis on shared leadership and widespread ownership by participants. Theologically, this model finds its roots in the history of Christian reform movements in which small groups ("little churches") within the larger congregation ("big church") effected change by sheer force of example. Understandably, then, this model finds a home in many Protestant communities. In this "congregational approach," as one advocate has called it (Martinson, 1988), every adult in the congregation helps pass on faith to teenagers, while certain adult leaders are identified as role models in this process who monitor the level of the congregation's hospitality toward youth. The team model is also the primary expression of parachurch groups and some conservative, evangelical churches founded on the charisma of a strong pastor (Smith, 1991). Although every adult in the congregation is a youth leader in the sense that they are role models for faith, specific activities engage youth in helping their peers "catch" faith from one another. The team model lends itself to youth empowerment, since youth themselves serve on the team which guides the religious youth program and function as full participating

members in every aspect of congregational life, from worship to committees, alongside adult guarantors.

The family model--actually a blend of the team and midwifery/adoption models--extends the assumptions underlying team models even further. In family models of religious youth work, the primary locus for the transimission of cultural/faith identity is in the family unit. The home becomes, in itself, a sanctuary for religious reflection. Not surprisingly, this model appears often in religious communities whose history has included persecution that forced the worshipping community to scatter, and whose values self-consciously contrast the values of the dominant culture.

As expected, despite the fact that all religious youth programs emphasize the role of the family in religious formation, in the interviews conducted for this project the family model surfaced only in Jewish communities. Unlike team models, in the family model cultural/faith identity is not "caught"; children born to Jewish parents are Jewish. However, this identity must be nurtured in an environment which frees it to grow. In this respect the family model mimics the midwifery/adoption model: at circumcision a child is recognized as one of God's chosen race of Israel, and now enters a period in which cultural/faith identity must be nourished. In Jewish life, the most important religious youth workers are family members. Guarantors of young persons' Jewishness are not members of a synagogue or adult leaders of a religious youth movement; they are the young person's parents. While attending synagogue may be important, and while interaction with other Jews is critical to keep a young person aware of his cultural/faith identity, according to the teachings of

Torah it is his parents who are responsible for his faith development. They work towards this end as a team who model "Jewishness" for him; this way he, in turn, will be able to model "Jewishness" for his own children (Huberman, 1988; Schlesinger, 1974).

Kinship models

William Myers' recent work on culturally-based models of youth ministry has brought into clearer focus differences between religious youth work in some African- American religious communities and white religious communities (Myers, 1991a). His painstaking ethnographic research over the past four years has identified the kinship model as an expression of African-American religious youth work. While this model may be present in a variety of settings, of the interviews conducted for this paper, kinship models surfaced only in African-American contexts. Rooted in the history of pre-Civil War America, when African-American blood kinships were radically broken by slavery, the black church became a crucible for "fictive kinship," a type of surrogate family which informs the African-American community's approach to youth ministry even today (Myers, 1991).

In this model, the centerpiece of the religious youth program is worship with the congregation; faith is something which can only be owned in the context of a worshipping community. The pastor is frequently both the "adult" pastor and the "youth" pastor; he or she is actively engaged in some dimension of religious youth work. Instead of distancing young people programmatically or physically from the adult congregation, the kinship model assumes that everyone in the congregation is a youth minister, including the youth themselves, who take active leadership roles in all aspects of liturgy and program-

ming. In fact, the traditional structures of youth work mentioned earlier may be absent in the kinship model, except for the significant adult-youth relationship; young people are so thoroughly integrated into the congregation's daily life that discrete youth activities may be deemed superfluous. Although no research has viewed Jewish corporate life as a type of kinship model of religious youth work, an argument could be made for its usefulness in describing the community-centered ethos of Jewish youth work as well.

Corporate/consumer models

Myers' work also elucidated the most common model for religious youth work which appears in some form in nearly every religious community: the corporate/consumer model. Emerging from post-war America's corporate consciousness, especially in white congregations whose membership included corporate executives and managers, the corporate/consumer model approaches faith as something youth will choose if it meets their perceived needs. Whereas kinship models actively involve adolescents in worship, corporate/consumer models often separate teenagers from the worship process, sometimes by not requesting their participation, other times by physically removing the youth from the sanctuary during the worship hour so they can participate in their own programs away from the rest of the congregation. The youth minister is hired as a middle manager in charge of a discrete department; when he "wears out in two and a half years, he will be replaced" (Myers, 1991). Each participant in this model is important to its functioning; each part is also replaceable. The pastor of the congregation is intellectually involved in, and supportive of, the youth program; he or she does not become involved in it personally. Bor-

rowing largely from the models offered to youth at school, the corporate/consumer model provides a wide array of options for youth participation to increase the odds of a teenager "buying into" some part of the youth program. The power of the white community in American society has helped market this model as normative for religious youth work; the vast majority of resources produced for religious youth work are intended for use in corporate/consumer models (Myers, 1991).

The Extent of Service

No one knows how many youth are served by religious youth programs. One study of teenage time use found that 34% of youth surveyed said they were involved in religious youth groups (National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, 1990). Other estimates indicate, with some consistency, that approximately one-half of American teenagers say that they are involved in a church or a synagogue (Benson, 1990), but this figure does not assess their involvement in religious youth programs per se. One poll estimated that approximately half of church-affiliated youth report involvement in church-related youth programs, while one in four say they are involved in Sunday School (Stone, 1988). In a recent study of Protestant denominations, only three out of ten teenagers reported involvement in any form of Christian education, including youth ministry (Search Institute, 1990). Many denominational leaders consulted for this paper confessed that they "simply have no idea" how many youth are served by their denominations' youth programs.

Participation in religious youth programs is difficult to measure empirically for two reasons. First, with the exception of national "events," youth councils, and policy making bodies which determine

general program structure and emphasis, religious youth work is intensely "local." Since most of the funding for youth work comes from a local congregation or fundraising efforts by the youth organization itself, religious youth programs' membership statistics are not closely scrutinized beyond the local level. In the absence of local statistics, participation in religious youth programs is sometimes estimated according to the number of parishes existing in a given denomination, rather than according to the number of youth actually served. For example, there are approximately 20,000 Roman Catholic parishes in the U.S.; according to the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, "about one-third" of these parishes have youth programs (Henderson, 1990). United Methodists are responsible for 35,000 American congregations; the United Methodist Discipline recommends that each of these have an active youth fellowship program. But how many actually do, and how many youth are actually served, according to the denominational youth staff person, is "impossible to tell" (Salsgiver, 1990).

A second factor contributing to the difficulty assessing the extent of service in religious youth programs is the fluid nature of religious youth work. In most congregations, the number of youth served by a youth program exceed the number of youth who are actually reported by a congregation's membership records, which commonly list only baptized or confirmed persons; or, in synagogues, families who pay dues. A few groups do offer specific numerical pictures; Youth for Christ, an evangelical parachurch group with an active ministry in juvenile detention institutions, reports that 22,000 youth made "commitments to Christ" in fiscal year 1989-90, and 551,000 youth heard the message of Christ "presented to them in one way or the other" through Youth for Christ activities. This specificity is far more

likely in independent organizations who conduct their own fundraising and who therefore must communicate the breadth of their outreach to potential contributors than in denominational programs relying on local church budgets for support.

Most religious youth programs, however, are more cautious; counting the number and nature of religious conversions is muddy water. Not only is there disagreement about the priority of the goals of religious youth work, but there is uncertainty over which youth "count" among the "converted." Outreach, for example, extends a program's service to adolescents; who can tell how many youth in a given community were touched by a local parish youth group's clean-up efforts after Hurricane Hugo? And even where statistical data is reasonably reliable (as it is, for example, among Lutherans and Southern Baptists, who despite their congregational polity have unusual success in tracking their national youth statistics), these statistics reflect youth "whose names appear on a Sunday School roster, even if they only showed up once" (Day, 1990). Many religious youth programs, such as one-on-one, informal mentoring programs do not chart attendance at all. Some youth, who are not officially involved in a religious program, nonetheless are affected by attending worship with their friends or by forming a bond with a youth pastor interested in them. These "marginally involved" youth do not fit neatly into statistical categories, and yet they figure into the ministry and outreach of many religious communities.

Service to Young Adolescents

Almost universally, religious communities address their youth work to high school students (grades nine through twelve), although

the 1980s saw a steady increase in the number of programs designed for young adolescents, especially for youth in grades seven and eight, and occasionally six. While many religious communities express interest in expanding their service to upper elementary grades, programs for this age group still qualify as children's ministry,[16] and there is debate about whether the needs of ten-year-olds are similar enough to the needs of twelve-year-olds to merit the appellation "adolescent" (Asher, 1991; Borman, 1990; Rosenzwieg, 1991).

Still, the trend toward serving younger adolescents is gaining momentum; religious youth leaders interviewed for this paper report noticeably higher involvement among ten- to fifteen-year-olds than among older teenagers, estimating between 50 and 75 percent of youth involved in the church to be "under fifteen." The widely accepted reason is availability. Younger adolescents are less likely to have competing activities, such as extracurricular organizations, part-time jobs, or a "significant other," than older teenagers. Even if they have other interests, without a driver's license they are often captive to their parents' transportational whims. Since parents are often simultaneously involved in the religious community, the potential for young adolescent participation in the religious youth program is great. While a few organizations surveyed report greater participation in the upper grades, especially parachurch groups who have historically operated on high school campuses but who are currently developing middle high ministries, these groups are quick to point out the vibrance of their new junior high programs and the pressure they feel to expand them further.

The large numbers of young adolescents participating in religious

[illegible] growing, however. While the growth of young adolescent religious youth programming is a widely accepted phenomenon, most of the denominational leaders consulted for this report qualified their estimates of participation; while there are large numbers of fifth and sixth graders involved in children's programs, around the age of twelve or thirteen, the age when most religious communities begin their youth groups, participation drops off sharply in both churches and synagogues. Age thirteen--the traditional age for bar/bat mitzvahs and confirmation--is a source of concern in religious communities. Formal programs for teenagers, such as Hebrew school and confirmation classes, are stressed during young adolescence; upon completion of the formal program, however, there is either nothing for the teenager to "graduate into," or the young teen does not make a successful transition into the new type of program offered (Plutzer, 1991; Kilstein, 1991). Most religious communities experience yet another sharp decline in adolescent participation around age fifteen, when drivers' licenses, part-time jobs, and wider social circles compete for teenagers' time.

Consequently, most religious youth leaders agree that religious youth work's most effective programming remains with older youth; while more young adolescents may be involved in formal instruction than older adolescents, much more informal youth programming is available to older teenagers. Both Christian and Jewish youth leaders report that, while fewer adolescents remain in religious groups after age fifteen, those who do remain exhibit higher levels of commitment to both the religion and the youth program than do their younger counterparts. Adolescents who "stick it out" in a religious youth program through age fifteen are suddenly eligible for a vast array of

program options and peer leadership development. The irony is that the availability of these options for older adolescents coincide with the time they are most likely to be siphoned away from the religious community by other demands on their time (Kilstein, 1991; Blackwell, 1991). Many of the religious youth programs for older adolescents were developed at a time when fifteen to eighteen year olds had fewer social or economic options. A century and a half of program development for high school and even college-aged youth make religious youth programs more responsive to, and more practiced with, older adolescents. This is especially true of opportunities beyond the local religious community itself: work camps, leadership development events, trips to Israel, and the like have all been established with older teenagers in mind.

While no one wants to abandon these older adolescent programs, religious communities loudly voice their desire, indeed their desperation, for more age-level appropriate programs for young teenagers. The clamor for young adolescent religious youth programs is especially loud in urban areas where, as one denominational youth staff person put it, "kids are very sophisticated very young" (Svoboda, 1991). Yet the urban poor adolescent is most likely <u>not</u> to benefit from middle high religious youth programming. Young adolescent religious youth programs, despite their increasing prominence, are primarily the province of large, monied churches. A 1988 survey of junior high youth groups in Christian churches found that 55 percent of these programs were located in suburbs, in congregations averaging 2,060 members. Sixty percent of these churches considered themselves "wealthy" (Roehlkepartain, 1988b).

Service to Ethnic and Low Income Youth

The number of ethnic youth served by religious youth work is elusive, since many African-American religious communities, and perhaps others, rely on the integrated kinship model of religious youth work, without discrete structures which quantify youth involvement in the congregation. While the lack of these structures makes the numbers of youth served difficult to count, it does not mean they are unserved by religious youth work. In fact, some have argued that this thorough integration into the religious community is extraordinarily effective in achieving the goals of religious youth work, even though this work does not take place primarily through discrete structures for youth alone (Crawford, 1991; Myers, 1991; Roberts, 1980).

That said, however, the vast majority of religious youth programs which <u>are</u> distinct from the worshipping community are most utilized by white middle class youth. This may reflect the fact that parent congregations are strongly identified with single ethnic groups--Martin Luther King once called 11:00 on Sunday morning "the most segregated hour in America"--and religious youth organizations are disproportionately white and affluent because so are American churches and synaogues. Or, the "whiteness" of religious youth work may reflect the disproportional "whiteness" of religious youth leadership, although ethnic communities are making great strides in developing youth leadership who can reflect their cultural concerns (Crawford, 1991; Henderson, 1990; Elizondo, 1990; Schultz, 1990b).

Although many ethnic religious communities are situated in low-income, urban environments, youth ministry leaders perceive only marginal differences between low-income and affluent religious communi-

ties' ability to fund their youth work. As one expert on the African-American church put it: "You fund the perceived need" (Crawford, 1991). While ethnic religious communities tend to fund more preventative and rehabilitative adolescent services than do Anglo-American churches, both ethnic and Anglo religious communities appear to be equally committed to religious youth work in their communities. The community economic level is a critical factor; most ethnic religious communities are much smaller and poorer than their white counterparts. This makes hiring persons devoted to youth work a rarity in ethnic parishes. "The only reason youth ministry is easier to fund in middle and upper income areas," observed Rod Boriak of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, "is that they can afford to hire staff; and they can afford to care for them better so they stay longer" (Boriak, 1990).

For the most part, the content and process of religious youth programs in ethnic communities echoes the content and process of white, middle class communities. Sometimes this is by default; denominational leaders in ethnic ministries bemoan the lack of culturally-adapted resources available for religious youth work (Elizondo, 1990; Frank, 1991). Both ethnic and low-income religious youth programs report more time spent instructing youth about social problems than do Anglo programs; AIDS awareness, teen pregnancy, drug abuse, and education were commonly cited program topics in ethnic youth work. This may reflect community-specific needs, cultural orientation, or both. The Girl Scout study found that African-American and Hispanic adolescents, regardless of their source of moral authority, consistently reported greater likelihood of altruistic behavior than white youth (Girl Scouts, 1990).

Pacific-Asian American teenagers are in a unique situation among ethnic religious youth programs due to a particular cultural pressure to assimilate into dominant American culture thereby combatting "foreigner" stereotypes commonly ascribed to persons of Pacific or Asian descent (Ng, 1991). Even were Pacific-Asian American adolescents are second-generation Americans, youth ministry in these churches tends to replicate white, middle class delivery systems, and utilizes resources designed for white, middle class youth as a means of learning dominant American culture (Ng, 1991; Schultz, 1990). Still, like all ethnic religious youth programs, when Pacific-Asian American religious youth programs study themes common to most religious youth groups, they do so through the lenses of a culture they hope to preserve. Pacific-Asian American youth, for example, spring from a cultural heritage which values extraordinarily high commitments to family and academic success; which stresses loyalty to all family pursuits, including working in the family business, over extracurricular participation at school; which encourages silence on human sexuality; and which is trapped by society's "model minority" stereotype which often tracks Pacific-Asian American youth into certain careers regardless of individual gifts and interests (Ng, 1991). These values cast a specific light on the Christian way of life as interpreted by Pacific-Asian American religious youth programs.

Service to At-Risk Adolescents

The at-risk adolescent is a mounting concern for religious communities. Religious youth programs are increasingly aware of their "self-selectivity"; teenagers who choose to participate in such programs are, in some ways, already more sheltered from at-risk behavior

than their peers by virtue of their decision to associate with a community structure (Benson, 1990; Ianni, 1989). Religious communities tend to perceive at-risk youth to be <u>outside</u> their membership, and while they recognize the enormous need for services for at-risk adolescents, they are sincerely frustrated at their lack of access, or perceived lack of access, to these teenagers. Except for religious charities, which allocate millions of dollars to services for troubled youth, religious youth programming is nearly always geared towards the healthy adolescent. Although religious youth leaders recognize a need to address at-risk behavior, most programs are designed to keep the presumably healthy adolescent healthy, rather than to address the teenager already at-risk. Of the organizations consulted for this project, only the parachurch group Youth for Christ named service to at-risk teenagers as a signature feature of its work.

One reason for low levels of at-risk involvement in religious youth programs is religious communities' reluctance to classify at-risk youth as a separate "target" for religious youth work. Concern for <u>all</u> youth is a persistent theme throughout religious youth work. When asked how they defined at-risk youth, nearly half of the religious youth leaders interviewed for this paper replied: "All youth are at risk." Singling out any one sector of the population for "special" attention is interpreted as slighting others. Perhaps religious communities stigmatize at-risk behavior to the point of denial; or perhaps they recognize that youth in religious communities face the same cultural pressures as non-religious youth, and are therefore "at-risk" throughout adolescence, even in the absence of at-risk behaviors. Religiosity has been demonstrated to mitigate the likelihood

of behaviors such as drug use, sexual activity, and delinquency, but at-risk behaviors are also common among religious youth.[17] Some religious communities may consider all youth at risk due to certain theological postures of the community which stipulate that since all humans are sinners at-risk of damnation, then all teenagers are at-risk. What is clear is this: even teenagers "innoculated" with religiosity can succumb to at-risk behavior, and the church must respond.

To date, religious responses to adolescent at-risk behavior have been almost entirely local initiatives. As one Lutheran youth leader said, "So far, [the at-risk youth] is being addressed more at the grass roots level than at the national level" (Boriak, 1990). Although denominational leaders criticized the lack of national strategies to address these youth, many are "thinking about developing something" in this area. Most denominations and all entrepreneurial groups, sensing a need and a market, have begun to develop resources designed to preempt at-risk behavior, and several religious youth leader training events have developed optional leadership workshops to promote understanding of at-risk adolescents.

However, nowhere is the religious community's local autonomy more pronounced than in religious youth programs which address at-risk youth. Hundreds of churches and synagogues each year target at-risk teenagers in their neighborhoods who may or may not be affiliated with a religious community. Some of these programs are designed to address personal needs of youth in the immediate environment; an inner-city United Methodist church in Minnesota bought a vacant house next door to the church, filled it with computers donated by a local corporation, and opened its doors as a computer laboratory for street youth

who want to learn basic skills necessary for getting a job (Martinson, 1991). Other at-risk programs have distinctly religious overtones, such as Youth for Christ's conversion-oriented outreach to juvenile delinquents in institutions. When asked why it makes a difference that such services exist in a religious community, even if there is no outwardly religious purpose, the director of camping for the United Jewish Association/Federation in New York spoke for many when he said: "Because it is our tradition. We are taught to help the widow and the orphan, to reach others who are in need" (Melzer, 1991). Still, religious youth leaders seem unanimous in their concern that more needs to be done to address the at-risk adolescent in religious youth programs.

Service to Girls and Boys

After a generation of responding to changes which have significantly altered the role of women in society, religious communities are strongly committed to the coeducational nature of most religious youth programs. More girls than boys participate in religious youth programs except among young adolescents; middle high youth programs seem to involve equal numbers of girls and boys. Girls tend to remain in religious youth programs longer than boys, which may help corroborate research showing that, although adolescent religiosity decreases with age, boys' religiosity decreases at a faster rate than girls'. Religious youth leaders resist separating girls' and boys' programs for fear of returning to male power dominance. Religious youth leaders see the coeducational communities of religious youth work as a significant vehicle for reducing sexist attitudes among youth and perhaps even in the religious community as a whole (Day, 1990).

In only a few communities is single-sex programming important to religious youth work. Among Latter Day Saints, the fundamental form of religious youth work occurs in single-sex classes arranged according to age, although classes do plan coeducational activities as

well. One mainline Protestant denominational youth director expressed concern that society's zeal for inclusiveness desensitized the church's appreciation for the different needs of adolescent boys and girls (Riley, 1990). African-American denominations have witnessed the inauguration of programs specifically designed for black males and their role/needs in the African-American community. Yet even this is viewed with caution. Vanella Crawford of the Congress of National Black Churches warns: "I'm concerned with our emphasis on the vulnerability of the black male. There are certain needs which must be addressed; but it would be a mistake to separate boys from girls--they face basically the same needs" (Crawford, 1991). Several denominations who affirmed the coeducational nature of their youth programs found it appropriate on certain issues--notably, sexuality--to divide into single-sex groups for discussion.

Accountability

One characteristic most religious youth programs share is a relatively low level of accountability. No formal criteria exist in the professional field of religious youth work by which one can measure the effectiveness of either a religious youth program or a religious youth worker; evaluation, when it occurs, is highly subjective (Borman, 1990; Elizondo, 1990; Schultz, 1990). Although many organizations cite general objectives for their work with teenagers, the extent to which these objectives filter through the rank and file membership varies widely; where the organizational vision was part of the local youth program's vocabulary, it was the result of an intentional denominational strategy to obtain a coherent youth program at all levels of the denominational structure. Those with the most specific denominational objectives for youth work tended to have the highest levels of accountability in their overall youth programs, with these objectives serving as the unifying structure out of which local,

regional, and national programs and leadership training evolves.

Three denominations who have made particularly concerted efforts to relate denominationally-stated objectives to local program strategy and leadership development are the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of Jesus Christ-Latter Day Saints, and the North American Federation of Temple Youth. The 1976 National Conference of Catholic Bishops' "Vision Statement" identified seven specific objectives for Catholic youth ministry: evangelism, worship, community, justice and peace, healing and reconciliation, leadership development, and advocacy for youth. Ideally, these standards not only became the governing vision of Catholic youth programs at all levels of the denomination for the next fifteen years. Even though this strategy met with mixed success due to the "vision's" uneven application in local parishes and dioceses (Harvey, 1991), it did provide informal evaluation criteria which could be used for any Catholic youth ministry unit, and which still serve as the unifying framework for Catholic youth leadership training (Henderson, 1990).

The Church of Jesus Christ-Latter Day Saints interprets youth ministry development as leadership training in the church for youth of all ages. While this single purpose is unique among religious youth programs, Latter Day Saints view leadership in the community as the vehicle to all other aspects of Christian life. Motivated by "servant-as-leader" models of ministry, age-level classes are youth-led, with weekly meetings required of adolescent class leaders to learn the skills of servant leadership. This is not only the model for Latter Day Saint youth work; it is the pervasive model for ministry to all age-levels in every Latter Day Saints ward, where children, youth and adults all meet in similar peer-led class structures.

One of the most innovative approaches to intentional accountability is the North American Federation of Temple Youth's "Tikkun Olam"

program, which means "repair of the world." If a local youth group of the North American Federation of Temple Youth elects to be in the "Tikkun Olam" program, it is invited to write its own contract stipulating agreement to engage in certain programs, spanning denominationally-approved goals, throughout the year; these goals include including religious action, social action, service to the community, and service to the local congregation. If the youth group fulfills its contract within the year, it is recognized nationally. According to denominational youth director David Frank, most N.F.T.Y. (pronounced "nifty") related youth groups opt to be part of "Tikkun Olam," and most complete their contracts, resulting in rather widespread program consistency and accountability that is still completely voluntary (Frank, 1991). Since each group writes its own contract with its own resources in mind, the process has great flexibility; "Tikkun Olam" occasionally even accepts contracts from individual Jewish youth, who live far away from a Reform congregation but who want to experience an intentionally Jewish way of life (Frank, 1991).

In most situations, however, even when broad objectives are articulated for a religious youth program, no mechanism exists for holding either programs or leadership accountable to these objectives. Consequently, religious youth work tends to be vulnerable to disjointed programming and leadership development without intentional efforts to unify all aspects of youth work around specific, widely agreed-upon goals for the religious community's involvement with youth.

Adult Leaders in Religious Youth Programs: Who Are They?

Volunteers

Volunteers are the lifeblood of religious youth programs. Some 80% of those working with teenagers in religious settings work without pay, often in addition to other full-time jobs, offering anywhere from two to twenty hours a week to adolescents in a religious youth program. In ethnic churches the percentage of volunteers rises to more than 90%, primarily because most ethnic churches lack the resources for multiple staff (Blackwell, 1991; Crawford, 1991; Elizondo, 1990; Mack, 1991). Some predominantly white denominations face similar staff constraints; fewer than 35% of Presbyterian congregations have a second staff person for church programming, and out of 1,200 Unitarian Universalist congregations in the United States, only two have full-time staff persons in youth ministry (Nishioka, 1990; Riley, 1990). In some denominations and ethnic support organizations, even the national directors for youth work are volunteers (Blackwell, 1991; Ng, 1991).

Professionals

An estimated 5% of Protestant and Catholic youth workers are considered "paid part-time" staff; another 15% of religious youth leaders are full-time church staff persons, although this number includes clergy who are full-time church employees but whose portfolios include many duties besides youth ministry (Carotta, 1990). Some denominations have long designated a "youth pastor" on church staffs, especially in evangelical traditions (Ross, 1990). Whether clergy or lay, full-time youth ministers are often charismatic but overworked paragons of dedication ripe for burnout, giving in excess of sixty

hours a week to their vocation and leaving their posts after an average tenure of two and one-half years (Myers, 1991); for Jewish professional youth workers, the average stay is eighteen months or less (Shanky, 1991). Among Christians and Jews alike, professional youth leadership is more often a matter of default than vocational choice; the most common way to select a youth minister is to assign oversight of teenagers to the youngest and/or newest clergyperson on staff or to a lay director of education. No theological or educational training is required for the vast majority of religious youth work; indeed, a common problem is that persons with these backgrounds quickly are promoted away from hands-on contact with teenagers, leaving actual work with teenagers perpetually in the hands of the least prepared and least experienced (Boriak, 1990; Shanky, 1991; Stone, 1991).

Religious Youth Leader Development: How Are They Trained?

Every religious youth leader consulted for this project identified youth worker training as a serious problem confronting American religious youth programs. Training opportunities are too few and too far removed from the persons who stand to have the most impact on adolescents in a religious community: volunteer youth workers and clergy. The issue is not whether training is technically available to religious youth workers; it is. Full-time youth workers have at their disposal denominational training programs, ecumenical training institutes, and a variety of two-hour to two-week workshops at local, regional, and national levels. Some denominations and entrepreneurial groups have inaugurated youth ministry certification programs, some-

times in conjunction with theological seminaries, in a quest for quality and consistency across a growing professional field. But while leaders in religious youth work agree that youth leader training has vastly improved in the past decade, especially insofar as it is suited to the developmental needs of adolescents (Carotta, 1990; Schultz, 1990; Yaconelli, 1990), there simply is not enough of it. Even more problematic is the inaccessibility of these training events to volunteers, and a severe shortage of training which addresses religious youth workers in ethnic or at-risk situations or who work with young adolescents (Carotta, 1990; Elizondo, 1990; Ng, 1990; Roberto, 1991; Schultz, 1990).

Reaching Volunteers

Some organizations have made serious efforts to address the vacuum in religious youth leader development; most have not, due to limited resources, interest, or both. Given the financial pressure facing religious youth organizations, religious communities recognize that they must continue to rely on volunteers to shape the faith of their young. Most also admit that this important educational goal is usually handled by the untrained--although some of these individuals may be highly educated in other avenues of religious life. Training expectations for religious youth leadership ranges from masters' degrees in youth ministry, social work, or education, on the one hand, to "breathing" on the the other--the only criterion required for religious youth workers, according to two different Protestant denominational youth directors. Generally speaking, training is not required for adults who work with teenagers in religious settings; the vast majority of youth workers' training is a talk with their

predecessor and a few weeks on-the-job.

Independent religious youth organizations who are unaffiliated with a denomination or a synagogue also depend on volunteers for most "hands-on" time with teenagers, but these volunteers are usually augmented by a corps of superbly trained professionals in youth work and, sometimes, theology. The parachurch group Young Life, for example, requires staff to complete a master's degree in youth ministry; the recommended degree program is offered in conjunction with accredited Protestant theological seminaries. Youth for Christ staff must complete a year-long supervised internship year "on-the-job," followed by mandatory training "updates" every two years. Although not required, leaders in independent Jewish religious youth movements are expected to have some academic background in social work, education, or a related field, as are teen workers in Jewish Community Centers. One Jewish Community Center executive in New York City observed that, due to low salaries which make recruiting good leadership difficult, these standards have been relaxed somewhat in recent years, to the detriment of the quality of teen workers in Jewish Community Centers (Rosenzwieg, 1991).

The real issue, then, is hwo to make training available and accessible to non-professionals who do most religious youth leadership, and how to adapt this training to address the teenagers whom volunteers actually see in their work. Consensus among religious youth leaders involved in training others is that the best training programs are a week long (or longer) with some opportunity for networking and follow-up with other youth leaders. The least effective model of religious youth leader training is the half-a-day (or shorter) workshop. Yet the short workshop is the only form of

training truly realistic for most volunteers who work full time, or cannot afford the high expense of tuition and travel for more prestigious training events.

A few denominations, Roman Catholics and Southern Baptists among them, offer leadership development programs for persons in youth ministry at every level in the denominational structure. The Southern Baptist Sunday School Board has developed a copious multi-level training system that not only develops leadership skills in youth pastors, but teaches them to train other youth leaders in their local jurisdictions--a strategy which ultimately provides training for both professional youth ministers and their volunteers. Some Lutheran and Jewish youth leadership benefit from the careful training of college-aged camp counselors, who go on to other forms of religious youth work with their camp training as their primary education in the field (Boriak, 1990; Kilstein, 1991).

More often, however, local training oversight is assigned to one regional denominational youth leader, often a volunteer or a full-time clergy person with multiple professional roles, who cannot invest the necessary time to develop on-going leadership training for volunteers in his region. As a result, volunteers resort to occasional workshops and printed materials offered by denominational staff or entrepreneurial groups, which may or may not apply directly to the volunteer's situation. The vacuum of available resources for Jewish youth work, for example, led the national office of the North American Federation of Temple Youth to subscribe to the orthodox Christian Group magazine for program ideas. "We have to produce all program resources through our denominational offices," explains N.F.T.Y.'s

director, David Frank. "Resources are gobbled up faster than we can produce them. We have no publication house; there are not enough of us [Reform Jews] to make such publications profitable. We adapt what we have to" (Frank, 1991).

Reaching Clergy

An obvious missing link in the professional preparation of religious youth workers is the seminary, an omission from theological education that rankles religious youth leadership. "The greatest handicap to youth ministry," says Dean Borman, an Episcopal priest who directs the Center for Youth Studies at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, "is that church and society have not given it a professional status at all. Social perqs and professional momentum pull would-be youth leaders away from youth ministry" (Borman, 1990). A Lilly foundation study in the 1970s found that 95% of theological seminaries called youth ministry a critical problem of the church; only 5% of these same institutions said they were doing anything about it (Borman, 1990). Two decades later, little has changed; a recent survey of more than 500 Protestant and Catholic youth ministers produced scathing indictments of seminaries for failing to prepare them for ministry with adolescents (Schultz, 1990). And yet, points out Leroy Wilke, youth staff person for The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, the majority of American churches are small congregations served by a single pastor who, in absence of volunteers or professional assistance, must "develop an understanding and willingness to work with youth" (Wilke, 1991). Developing this understanding among pastors in single-staff person churches, in fact, was identified as the top youth ministry priority for The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in the

1990's, with the assumption that clergy involved in youth ministry at local levels are the keys to fostering adolescents outreach.

Clergy interest and involvement in religious youth work varies according to the religious tradition and ethnic community represented. By and large, African-American clergy exhibit more interest and involvement in religious youth work than their white counterparts, in part because of cultural factors in the black community. Historically, these churches have viewed the well-being of young people as the corporate responsibility of the entire community, rather than the province of a few congregational leaders (Myers, 1991c).

In white evangelical Christian communities, clergy interest and involvement in youth ministry also tends to be high, although these communities often hire a theologically-trained, often ordained "youth minister" whose responsibility is to "minister to" young people, with or without the help of the rest of the congregation. Mainline white religious communities often de facto "exempt" clergy from religious youth work. The assumption is that the formation of youth is a "task" which is assigned to others so that the clergy may have time for higher priority items in the life of the congregation (Myers, 1991). Given the fact that these clergy, in all likelihood, received little or no seminary preparation for working with adolescents, there is little incentive for these clergy to consider youth an intentional part of their job description, although all would give youth ministry their rhetorical support. A few seminaries are beginning to look seriously at this curricular omission; but in the face of severe clergy shortages facing many mainline denominations, seminaries are reluctant to adapt educational process or content to encompass religious youth work, or to deploy theologically-trained personnel for

what they perceive to be "specialized" ministry.

Seminary coursework related to youth is valuable precisely because it targets the leaders who help set priorities in congregational and denominational life. Yet youth-related coursework is infrequently offered in seminaries; few attempts are made to integrate the concerns of youth with regularly offered seminary curricula. Faculty seldom develop a research interest in religious youth work, fearing credibility problems at publication time (Maas, 1990). Unintentionally, theological education has developed a religious leadership with little interest in, or knowledge of, the young. A hierarchy has been established in Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish communities in which didactic education is taken more seriously by the community than that which has been dubbed "informal," or alternative, education which adapts to the age-level needs of adolescents (Kilstein, 1991).

Leadership Training for Special Needs

To complicate this already uneven landscape, the territory implied by "religious youth work" is changing. In particular, the need for adults who are trained for work with young adolescents and at-risk teenagers has reached crisis proportions. No longer are such young people believed to be "outside" the parameters of religious youth work by most denominations. Dwindling teenage participation in most religious settings has led churches and synagogues to redefine who they serve and how they serve them. In particular, young adolescents and at-risk youth stand to benefit from this redefinition as the boundaries of religious youth work begin to encompass them. So far, however, religious communities have barely touched on these subpopulations in current leadership training efforts.

Young Adolescent Leadership

As young adolescents increasingly dominate the market share of youth available to religious youth programs, the thirst for training in this area has intensified. Perhaps this eagerness for training arises out of desperation; typically when several youth workers are involved in a religious youth program, the least experienced volunteer is assigned to the youngest adolescents (Stone, 1991, Martinson, 1991). Although Unitarian Universalists are in the process of developing a fifteen-hour training course on early adolescence, only two comprehensive programs specifically designed to train persons for religious work with young adolescents surfaced in this survey. Both of these require sustained commitments on the part of the youth worker to complete, but both offer superb training to participants:

The Center for Youth Ministry Development's "Early Adolescent Ministry Institute" is intended for full or part-time religious youth leaders. Currently a long-weekend program, organizers are considering expanding it to a more extended program that would meet over the course of several weekends for several years at various locations--a strategy which would increase its availability to volunteers. Though designed for Catholics, it is easily adapted to any religious community. A second approach to young adolescent leadership training is Group Publishing's "Youth Ministry Consultant" certification program for junior high ministry. Group's training is ecumenical, and is geared toward professional youth leaders or volunteers who can afford to spend a week in annual seminars over a period of three to four years. The process is expensive and location-specific; for youth leaders who can attend the required annual training convocation, it

affords quality instruction and the benefit of networking with hundreds of other religious youth workers in an ecumenical setting. Although readings and resources are weighted towards Group's own publications, the program has the added benefit of teaching religious youth workers to be trainers in their own right who become available to "consult" with interested congregations desiring to serve younger teens.

At-Risk Adolescent Leadership

The sparse training available to adults who work with young adolescents in religious settings is lush compared to training opportunities for leaders working with at-risk youth. Despite many religious youth organizations' own belief that "all youth are at-risk," all organizations contacted for this paper admitted to a paucity of training in this area. Several are developing resources and "special emphases" on certain at-risk behaviors such as suicide, teen pregnancy, drug awareness; most offer these topics as "workshop options" at large youth ministry training events. But comprehensive training for addressing at-risk adolescents through religious groups is simply nonexistent. Mike Carotta of Boys' Town is widely viewed as the groundbreaker in this area, adapting research on at-risk behavior for leadership training in the religious community; a training curriculum is forthcoming based on Carotta's work in this area with the Lilly Endowment.

Financial Concerns in Religious Youth Programs:

How Well Are They Funded?

Low priority items in any organization result in a lack of

resources: financial, personnel, time allocations. All of these resources are in short supply in religious youth work, leading to the widely shared opinion that religious youth programs are low priority items in most religious communities. Except in conservative evangelical Christian traditions, where support for youth work is high, religious communities are more apt to pay lip service than bills for those who work with adolescents. The funding shortage is most keenly felt in the lack of salary support for local youth leadership, and the lack of denominational support for personnel who can assist in the development of youth-serving resources.

Funding for religious youth programs, including salary support, is generated from three sources: 1) The local church/synagogue budget, derived from the gifts and dues of constituents in the congregation; 2) Participant fees, especially for camps, conferences, and denominational events; and 3) Independent fundraising conducted by the group itself, including grant proposals, direct mail appeals, door-to-door evangelization/solicitation, and the usual gamut of bake sales and car washes. Funds for religious youth work from each of these sources are decreasing at this time. While economic uncertainty affects program budgets, the real crisis of insufficient monies is the inability to develop leadership. This is especially true in urban ethnic religious communities; while these religious communities may raise money for a youth programs about as easily as their Anglo, suburban counterparts (Blackwell, 1991; Borman, 1990; Mack, 1991), the single staff person situation of most of these churches already places their religious youth work at a disadvantage.

While affirming the quality of the volunteers responsible for most religious youth work, religious youth leaders overwhelmingly

believe that more professional staff devoted to religious youth work at every level will help stabilize it (Myers, 1991). As one Jewish denominational leader stated, "[Religious youth work] just doesn't pay enough to be considered a career option for most people, so we will always have to scramble for people with the eclectic skills needed to work with youth" (Frank, 1991). Not only does this factor result in an over-reliance on untrained volunteers, but it virtually guarantees that even trained professionals cannot sustain a career in the field if he or she chooses to marry, move, or "upgrade" his or her position in the religious community with a theological degree or ordination--a move which, in denominations facing clergy shortages, suddenly makes the person "too valuable" to be devoted to youth work alone.

In the one in five cases where a youth minister does receive compensation, the salary is likely to be lower than those in education or social services. A recent study of lay and ordained full-time professional youth ministers in Christian churches placed the average compensation package in 1990 at $28,740 for males (a 23% increase from 1986) and $21,138 for females (a 6% increase from 1986). The average starting salary for a religious youth worker in 1990 was $17,187 (Group, 1990). Donald Ng, youth ministry staff director for the American Baptist Churches, points out that these low salaries are a "major factor" in youth ministry burnout:

> The financial package that goes along with a person's call to ministry is, in some ways, the confirmation of that call. If youth ministers are paid with great disparity compared to the "preaching ministers" or the "pastoral ministers," then they only have perhaps two or three years before they receive the signal that youth ministry is second-rate. And that's why we get burnout and that's why we never get people staying in youth ministry long enough to make a difference (Ng, 1990, p. 31).

While no one becomes a professional religious youth worker for the

financial benefits, low salaries do contribute to high turnover and difficulty in recruiting quality, long-term leadership. The decision to marry, move, or have a family frequently creates needs that a religious youth worker's salary cannot cover. Ironically, as Ng points out, low salaries also contribute to the stigma of the profession as a "second class" ministry by colleagues and congregations alike. Religious youth work is generally viewed as a "stepping stone" position until one gets a "real" ministerial appointment (Jones, 1989).

Funding difficulties for religious youth leadership is most obvious locally, but the reduction of denominational staff also jeopardizes religious youth organizations' ability to attract professionals to the field. At their best, denominational staff persons serve as advocates for better working conditions, including higher salaries, and help youth workers network with one another to reduce the isolationism that frequently accompanies the perception of second-rate professional status. But denominational youth staff are easy targets for budget cuts: "Denominational staff are being slashed everywhere, across the board," according to the 1990 Lilly foundation study on North American youth ministry (Carotta, 1990). In the face of scarce resources, Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish staff positions in youth work are vulnerable from the local level all the way up to the national agencies. Only Latter-Day Saints, who consciously devote the biggest proportion of each congregational budget to youth work (Rasmus, 1990), and Presbyterians, whose youth ministry office currently benefits from a budgetary cushion leftover from a recent denominational merger, said they felt comfortable with the financial

commitment their denomination made to religious youth work (Nishioka, 1990; Rasmus, 1990). Among all other denominations surveyed for this report, reaction to the financial support of youth ministry ranged from anxiety to panic.

Consensus among youth workers is that funds for religious youth work are better spent developing leadership than programs, especially when that leadership can beget other leadership. While all national staff persons are not equally effective in this capacity, their position in the denomination or youth organization gives them unique access to other potential leaders. Typically, however, financial pressure results in staff rather than program reductions. Currently, most of the major Protestant denominations have two or fewer full-time staff persons devoted to religious youth programming, the result of a recent wave of budget cuts which disproportionately affected youth-related staff positions. In effect, the decision to reduce national staff positions is potentially a decision to disadvantage the lifeline in religious youth work: well-trained local leadership.

STRENGTHS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Religious youth workers, like most youth workers, are simultaneously among the world's greatest optimists and most self-flagellating penitents. They are convinced that small amounts of significant youth-adult contact make great differences; at the same time, they agonize that not enough of this contact is initiated by religious communities--not nearly enough. When asked how well they thought religious youth work is accomplishing its goals, youth leaders chorused: "Above average." The overwhelmingly consistent qualifying remark given was this: "What we are doing, we are doing well. We just need to do more." The rallying cry for the future of religious youth programs is "more"--with qualifications. The handful of denominations satisfied with the priority religious youth work receives in their communities would like to see more of what they are already doing continue. The vast majority, however, are saying, "More would be great--but we're struggling just to hang on to the status quo." A few, particularly mainline Protestant denominations, believe that "more" is out of the question; they are losing ground fast to other priorities in their denominations.

Except for the role of national denominational youth structures, whose strength is marred by the reality of far fewer real dollars devoted to their cause than a generation ago (Kujawa, 1991; Myers, 1991b), the following assets characterizing today's religious youth programs are likely to continue in the near future. Like all institutional strengths, however, their longevity will depend on a kind of intentional support from the parent organization not evident in to-

day's religious communities.

Committed leadership

The factor cited most often--and without hesitation--in the success of religious youth work is the commitment of the adults who lead it. Denominational youth staff cite scores of miracles wrought by religious youth programs equipped with good adult leaders and very little else. One researcher, after completing his own study of North American youth ministry, described religious youth leadership as "extraordinary, people of passion who care deeply for kids, and who have the ability to live with the tensions inherent in ministry." Calling youth ministry "the most vibrant ministry in [the Christian] church," he pointed to the dwindling membership of mainline churches whose ministries may be "too dead to struggle. But youth ministry is struggling, and that is a sign of an enormous desire to live" (Carotta, 1990). Another denominational youth director was more direct: "The church loves young people" (Nishioka, 1990). While voicing concern over declining expectations that Jewish teen workers obtain training in social work and group process (Rosenzwieg, 1991), directors of Jewish youth organizations praise the overall expertise of adults working in non-synagogue-based Jewish youth movements (Kastner, 1991; Gidon, 1991) and the commitment of synagogue volunteers, camp staff, as well as alternative education teachers (Kilstein, 1991; Melzer, 1991).

Future directions:

There will always be adults in religious youth work with a zealous commitment to the adolescents they serve. There is disagreement, however, over whether the numbers of persons committed to reli-

gious youth work is likely to increase, or if religious communities are in fact dissuading their professional leadership away from youth work. Some observers say they are witnessing a growing number of persons in Christian communities who desire to enter youth ministry professionally (Schultz, 1989). At the same time, white mainline Protestant churches are in a state of serious decline, and in this institutional deathwatch religious youth leadership development is not perceived as a high priority. As one student of this phenomenon observed: "The seminary and the local church have never regarded youth ministry as 'real' ministry and this perspective tends to obviate against adults entering youth ministry" (Myers, 1991b, p. 6). Myers articulates an uneasiness shared by mainline Protestant youth workers but not felt by most mainline Protestant church leadership. He contends that the church has not taken seriously an historical, socio-economic, cultural "shift" that has caught the church "asleep on its feet":

> Adult volunteers caught in the cultural crunch of dual-income necessities are fading from the scene. Both wage-earners are exhausted. Link dual-income folk with the new-constellation families and you inevitably must recognize that there are few resources left for adults in such circumstances. Not many will "volunteer" for youth ministry (Myers, 1991b, p. 6).

In short, even if the interest in professional religious youth leadership would increase in the future--an opinion not universally shared--the role of the religious youth leader volunteer looks precarious at best. This tentativeness is a dangerous sign since four out of five of today's committed religious youth workers are volunteers.

Youth empowerment

The leadership modelled by caring adults is encouraged among the teenagers who work with them. Many youth workers consider religious

organizations' greatest contribution to adolescent development to be the empowerment it affords teenagers by increasing their self-esteem. "The qualifications for belonging to a church youth group are unique," observed Group Publishing's Thom Schultz. "There are no prerequisites to belong to the club; it's a more open community. That's why the [religious] youth group can attract kids and help kids whom nobody else will" (Schultz, 1990). While social dynamics are at work in religious youth groups just as they are in any gathering of adolescents, the principle of "inclusiveness"--that anyone is welcome and valued in God's eyes--is, at least unofficially, a "by-law" understood to be at the root of most religious youth communities.

Most religious youth programs offer opportunities which equip teenagers in the specific tasks of leadership as well. For the most part, religious youth groups strive to make youth partners in mission rather than "targets" for ministry. National denominational bodies tend to be more successful at executing this strategy than local congregations, if only because elected youth representatives to national bodies are self-selective in their desire to lead; planning groups comprised of representative teenagers interested in various youth events are common in both Christian and Jewish denominational programs, as well as in independent Jewish youth movements. Most of these programs involve youth in the denomination's policy-making structure, although the degree of this involvement varies widely. No youth program consulted for this paper relied exclusively on peer leadership; youth empowerment is understood to be best accomplished by a team of youth and adults working together.

Nowhere is the theme of youth empowerment taken more seriously

than in the Church of Jesus Christ-Latter Day Saints, where the term "youth ministry" is replaced by "youth leadership," on the premise that ministry is leadership development. In this tithe-paying denomination, the fifth largest religious body in the United States, budget allocations for youth leadership are larger than any other denominational program. Since each bishop's (pastor's) highest priority is youth leadership, "in any congregation's budget, the amount of money allocated for youth will be higher than any other designation" (Rasmus, 1990). The model for youth empowerment is simple: girls and boys are divided into single-sex classes according to age, with one class per gender per age. Each class is governed by a rotating "presidency," a team of four student leaders whose job is to minister to the others in the age group. This presidency rotates several times a year, so that every young person in a ward--at least once between the ages of ten and eighteen--has been designated a leader of his or her peers. Carolyn Rasmus, national director of the Latter Day Saints' young women's organization, explains: "We have a strong belief that youth need to feel valued, significant, and then they can contribute. These are keys to wholesome well-being. Helping young people develop leadership skills and discover talents is crucial to their development as adolescents." She goes on to describe the pervasiveness of youth leadership among Latter Day Saints: "Of the 400,000 young women in the denomination [between ages twelve and eighteen], for example, every single one of them is in a class, and at least 60% are actively involved" (Rasmus, 1990).

As in other denominations, however, Latter Day Saint youth empowerment serves a second purpose. The most important outcome of youth leadership, points out Rasmus, is that it enables a future

generation to "carry on the work of our church" (Rasmus, 1990). Denominational leaders readily admit that religious youth work serves as a laboratory to groom future, as well as present, leaders in the religious community (e.g., Boriak, 1991; Blackwell, 1991; Nishioka, 1990).

Future directions:

Co-leadership is prized by adolescents who feel a sense of "ownership" in denominational youth programs--and, consequently, the denomination--and symbolizes the impact youth can have on the church as a whole. Youth empowerment will continue as a theme in regional and national religious youth programming, and will receive increased attention in local youth programs as well. For instance, peer ministry programs are expanding as the concept of shared leadership encourages youth, in addition to adult program leaders, to become "missionaries" in their own spheres of influence (Dean, 1991).

Cohesive national structures

Given the fact that the sample surveyed for this paper relied heavily on denominational leadership, national structures for religious youth programming naturally received high marks. "It is crucial that youth can feel connected as a church," said one official. "It shows that they're part of a larger thing; it runs against a narrowing worldview. It is extraordinary for youth to discover other youth like them around the world, sharing their struggles" (Nishioka, 1990). Others value national structure because it helps youth connect to their denominational tradition, identity being defined in part organizationally (Blackwell, 1991; Rasmus, 1990). Still others, such

as the American Zionist Youth Organization, which among other things sponsors an annual parade in New York City to celebrate the founding of Israel, appreciate the momentum created by national events, made possible by organizational structures which unite youth from many different perspectives to plan and celebrate a common goal (Kastner, 1991).

In general, national religious youth structures received praise for the quality and scope of denominationally-sponsored national youth events, and for the sense of "connectedness" they convey to the youth who participate beyond the local level. It should be noted, however, that hundreds of Protestant religious bodies, which do not have national coordinating structures and/or which do not collect membership data, were excluded from this report for reasons described in the "Method" section. It should not be assumed that autonomous local religious youth programs are in any way inferior to or less successful than those affiliated with national denominational structures.

Future directions:

The future of national structures for religious youth work is uncertain, despite optimism on the part of denominational staff persons. These leaders believe their national structures to be defininte assets in their religious youth programs' delivery systems, and expect them to continue to serve as vehicles for implementing large youth events and as avenues for youth leadership development. Denominations are pleased to see the degree of ownership teenagers have in national structures of their organizations. United Church of Christ and Presbyterian denominational leaders are moving towards further institutionalizing that ownership by establishing youth-directed advocacy

councils within their denominations, akin to United Methodist's National Youth Ministry Organization, an independent voice for youth established outside of the age-level ministries of the denomination.

Yet denominational "clout" in religious youth work on the whole appears to be fading. While Jewish youth work on a national level looks relatively stable in that it is not experiencing cutbacks, Christian youth ministry may be in real jeopardy in light of the steady stream of staff and budget reductions in this area experienced recently by all but conservative evangelical denominations. "Most mainline national youth ministry structures will progressively grow weaker. . . unless a new and radically different vision occurs" (Myers, 1991b, p. 2). Citing the dismantling of many mainline denominational youth ministry structures of the 1960s, Myers notes that youth ministry budgets of these denominations today do not compare favorably in terms of "real dollars" with pre- or early-1960s levels of spending for national youth ministry structures. Myers and others believe that while national youth ministry structures may remain in place for several years, they either already have or will soon face budgetary reductions which could render them impotent (Myers, 1991a; Kujawa, 1991; Maas, 1990).

Relationship-intensive process

Religious youth leaders believe the relationship-centered educational methods of religious youth programs are healthy and developmentally-appropriate alternatives to didactic educational methods common in middle and senior high schools. Because much religious youth work occurs in the context of relatively small groups (even large groups tend to break into smaller sub-groups in the course of any

given youth gathering), religious youth programs offer a context in which each adolescent is, ideally anyway, noticed and active. Teaching based on "relational theology," as this strategy is sometimes called, is experiential and relies heavily on interpersonal dynamics as the medium for the message. It is applied unevenly in religious youth work, but is nonetheless a common theme articulated by religious youth workers. Group Publications has dubbed this method "active learning" and has made it the hallmark of their program and curriculum materials. Group's training events focus on teaching religious youth workers how to convert didactic material into relationship-centered teaching units. While not unique in their approach to relationship-centered programming, Group claims the widest audience for religious youth materials of any similar organization, with over 57,000 subscribers to their monthly resource magazine and more than 15,000 participants annually in Group-sponsored events (Sparks, 1989, p. 66); their success with this teaching strategy has resulted in consultant relationships with public school systems as well (Schultz, 1990).

Future directions:

The relationship-centered, experiential educational process will continue to distinguish most religious youth work from traditional academic settings. This process is likely to increase in popularity among professional youth leadership, who are most likely to be exposed to relational/experiential education at training events, and through the publications and networks of youth leadership professionals themselves. In fact, these leaders are likely to extend "active learning" to more formal, content-centered settings such as confirmation and Sunday School simply because it suits many of the developmental needs

of students in these settings. Resources which employ this educational philosophy will multiply, especially in entrepreneurial settings, but denominations may re-direct their materials to highlight these processes in order to compete with the growing popularity of entrepreneurial literature.

On the other hand, relational/experiential learning is seldom taken seriously by academic institutions preparing professional leadership for synagogues and churches, preferring more traditional passive educational methods with the objective of communicating content first. This often leads clergy and seminary instructors to view relational/experiential teaching as vaguely inferior to the more didactic teaching methods they experienced in their own schooling--an attitude which tends to result in infrequent usage of non-traditional educational methods in the religious community. Often clergy sense shortcomings in their passive teaching strategies once they apply them to teenagers; but, lacking modelling in alternative strategies which would better suit adolescent needs, many clergy simply conclude that "youth are difficult" and leave their tutelage to others.

"Other-directedness"

Leaders in religious youth work cite the "other-directed" ethos created by religious youth programs as another strength of today's youth work. In the absence of formal evaluation techniques, the mechanism commonly used to assess how "other-directed" participants in religious youth programs really are is the amount of teenage participation in group service projects. Recognizing the unwieldiness of this measurement, it is still worth noting that youth participation in religiously-sponsored service projects has increased dramatically in the past decade. Better-known work camps, for example, in which

teenagers spend a week or two repairing homes for someone in a disadvantaged community, fill up more than a year in advance; recently efforts have been made to adapt national and regional models of these work camps for local initiatives.[18]

Future directions:

Renewed societal interest in community service, as well as the outbreak of war in the Persian Gulf, have heightened religious youth programs' concern for outreach and social justice. The popularity of religious-affiliated organizations like Habitat for Humanity, service projects, work camps, and other service-oriented residential experiences will continue to grow in the next generation (Martinson, 1990; Schultz, 1990), although concerns so far appear to be more local than global in scope, except among Jewish youth for whom the recent war in the Gulf heightened interest in Israel and relationships in the Middle East (Gidon, 1991).

CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Despite historian Joseph Kett's label for the American twentieth century as "the era of the adolescent," today's teenagers face a world full of risk, without the networks of support and accountability of a century ago. Although religious youth work can survive briefly on its current strengths, religious youth leaders are gravely concerned about the directions religious youth work is not likely to pursue without resources and an intentional guiding vision. These new directions are considered vital to the survival and relevance of religious youth work into the twenty-first century. What are the gaps which must be filled for religious youth programs to flourish in the next generation? What strategies are available to religious institutions to provide teenagers with the necessary chrysalis for their complete transformation into adulthood? Obviously, more money would help tremendously. But that is not the entire picture. How more money would be invested, or more likely, how shrinking resources will be spent are matters of enormous concern. The challenges in religious youth work figure prominently in the thinking, and planning, of religious youth leadership preparing for a new century of adolescent outreach.

I. The Challenge of Strengthening Adult Leadership

Many experts believe that the most important factor in religious youth work is the role of the significant adult (Borman, 1990; Yaconelli, 1990). Unfortunately, of all the gaps in Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish religious youth programs, the most threatening is the lack of accessible adult leadership training. This is ironic, for reli-

gious youth leaders agree that most of the available adult leadership training is excellent; there simply is not enough of it. Notes Donald Ng of the American Baptist Churches: "Youth leader training is a great need. Denominations have been cutting back on staff, both nationally and in the local churches, and we've been damaged at great cost. We have lost our ability to work in cooperation with specialized organizations, such as the Center for Early Adolescence, while at the same time denominations are doing very little to develop their own programs" (Ng, 1991).

Strategies for Improvement

- **New models of leadership.** New models of leadership training are needed which address the accessibility needs of volunteers while maintaining the integrity of longer, more rigorous training events. Among other things, these models need to address a shift in the role of the adult professional in religious youth work. In the 1970s and 1980s, the religious youth leader was a do-er: she designed programs, provided counseling, made logistical arrangements, developed rapport with the program's supporting parent bodies. In the 1990s, however, the religious youth leader will become a "trainer" for youth ministry both for other adults and for the youth who serve alongside them (Schultz, 1990). Even if the Lone Ranger model of religious youth work could be persuaded to ride off into the sunset--an unlikely proposition in many denominations where the favored path is still to hire "a" person to get religious youth work "done" (Myers, 1991b)--multiple-leadership and congregational models need to be prepared to step in (Holderness, 1976b; Myers, 1991). Religious communities, not just program directors, must be re-educated to include youth leader-

ship as part of their corporate responsibility. Even where religious youth work is relationship-intensive, the needs of youth are so broad that several adults are required to reach the array of different teenagers available to any religious community, not to mention to stave off burnout in youth workers--a key factor in the high turnover rate of religious youth leaders. In short, the religious youth leader of the 1990s must learn to become a manager of other volunteers. She must not only learn the skills of youth leadership herself; she must be able to teach these skills to others and to educate the religious community on their corporate role in the process of shaping the lives and faith of the young.

- **Collaborative training ventures.** In light of decreasing funds for training in religious youth work, a common plea from professional youth leaders is interdenominational and interfaith collaboration on training endeavors. At present, many religious youth leaders agree that entrepreneurial groups offer the best training for practitioners. Denominational staff, however, are often hesitant to encourage attendance; "turf" turns out to be important to denominational efforts at training their leadership. Still, there is no reason why most subjects commonly covered in training programs of all denominations and youth movements--adolescent development, program management, how to handle volunteers--cannot be covered in tandem with another agency interested in similar issues. Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish youth are far more alike than different, and eliminating training redundancy will liberate resources which can be used to develop tradition-specific youth leadership events, or training programs that address other neglected areas, such as leadership with at-risk adolescents.

- **Relational/experiential teaching.** It has been said that

people love children; they just dislike youth (Smith, 1991). Seminarians, in particular, have grown to view youth work as a "second class" form of ministry which offers some valuable experience, but from which one escapes as soon as a "better" job is offered (Jones, 1989). One reason clergy are uncomfortable working with teenagers is the inadequacy with which seminaries prepare clergy to address this population (Stone, 1991).

Seminaries can reduce the stigma attached to youth work by introducing seminarians to developmentally-appropriate strategies of religious education with youth while they are in school. Teaching methods rooted in experiential learning and group process are adapted to the existential nature of teenagers, as well as to their strong need for interpersonal relationships. In religious settings, experiential/relational educational strategies are doubly appropriate since the stage of faith development common to adolescents is highly experiential and relationship-oriented (Fowler, 1981). Furthermore, experiential and relational learning have theological as well as educational significance. Jewish theology is predicated on the transformative experience of being saved by God at the Red Sea; Christian theology focuses on the transformative experience of Christ's resurrection and the subsequent new birth available to humanity. Vanella Crawford of the Congress of National Black Churches points out that, since the goal of much religious teaching is transformation, "Educational events need to be occasions where people are themselves transformed, as well as places to learn how to help transform the lives of adolescents" (Crawford, 1991).

- **Professional standards in religious youth work.** One "quality

control" available to religious youth work, which also helps validate religious youth work as a professional option, is the development of minimum professional standards to ensure some measure of excellence and consistency across various religious youth programs. Leadership certification programs are one effort in this direction, although denominational certification programs lack continuity and consistency across ecumenical lines. While one religious community need not impose its training standards on another, a degree of consistency can help communicate credibility and clarify the goals of religious youth work, especially to those outside of religious institutions.

- **Prioritizng leadership training financially.** Religious youth leadership training cannot wait for religious communities to generate funds for this purpose; in the face of the restricted budgets facing most non-profit organizations in this decade, increased real dollars available for religious youth leadership development are unlikely. Rather, what is at issue is the willingness of the religious community to view leadership development for adult youth workers as a priority worthy of substantial investment--not only for the generation hence, but for the near and present life of the struggling religious community. Church growth studies have established links between a congregation's visible commitment to young people and its likelihood to grow (Roehlkepartain, 1989). In light of the exodus of younth people from religious communities in the past twenty years (Osmer, 1989), developing leadership which can help stem this tide appears to address the institional needs for self-preservation. Some studies have indicated that a teenager's participation in a religious institution tends to compensate for certain developmental "deficits" and reduce that

teenager's likelihood to participate in at-risk behaviors (Benson, 1990)--behaviors which have costly consequences for society. Religious organizations, however, are less likely to persuade their adherents with investment rhetoric than with moral suasion: addressing the needs of teenagers is a good and right thing. In communities self-consciously devoted to promoting that which is considered morally good, denominational dollars can assist in encouraging congregations to emphasize developing religious leadership which responds to the moral call of the community.

Denominational leaders and executives of parent organizations who sponsor religious youth work are uniquely situated for undergirding adult leadership training for religious youth programs. "It is ironic," said one religious youth worker interviewed for this report, "that at age two or three, parents are completely involved with their children. There is no question that day care staff persons are suitably trained, and parents invest huge sums for the day care that seems best for the child. And yet, by the time that child is fifteen, he sees less and less of his parents, at a time when he may even need them more than he did before. His parents don't give a second thought to the fact that the synagogue youth director has no training; and if he needs money to go on a retreat, suddenly there's not enough there" (Shanky, 1991).

Organizational executives and denominational leaders are in a unique position to initiate some of the collaborative training mentioned above. By virtue of their role in the organization they can advocate livable wages, insurance, and other benefits that attract long-term commitments from religious youth workers. They influence

communication channels which heighten the visibility of religious youth work in the denomination or organization. Their overall vantage point makes them natural conduits for ecumenical and interfaith cooperation.

One denomination that has made such a commitment is The Southern Baptist Convention. For example, the Southern Baptist Convention Sunday School Board make a conscious commitment to provide plentiful training opportunities to Sunday School leaders at national, regional, and local levels several times a year; it costs the participant nothing except room and board. All conference expenses are paid for from the sale of Southern Baptist publications, including Sunday School materials; not a penny of youth leader training money comes out of an offering plate. This also means a certain level of commitment and accountability may be expected from religious youth workers, both paid and volunteer; freed from concerns about accessibility and cost, both lay and ordained youth leadership are free to pursue more on-going, in-depth theological training for religious youth workers who, either officially or unofficially, function as part of the religious community's leadership team.

- **Developing the personhood of religious youth workers.** In the end, most leadership is a matter of the person who leads; it was this observation that caused Joy Dryfoos to recommend "cloning charismatic leaders" as a way to develop leadership who make progress against at-risk behavior in adolescence (Dryfoos, 1990). The presence of a charismatic leader has been identified as a critical factor in the success of many religious youth programs, churches, and other movements which develop large followings (Smith, 1991). Related to this is a growing concern that theological institutions are <u>not</u> developing

charismatic individuals for the leadership of religious institutions, and a body of research suggesting that the development of the entire personhood of the leader may determine, more than his skills, his success in youth leadership, pastoring, parenting, or a number of other "caring" roles (Martinson, 1991).

In ancient Israel, rabbinical students became educated by literally following a learned rabbi everywhere he went, until his ways became their ways. It is a model that bears repeating. Apprenticeships, leadership biographies, time spent with other admired religious youth leaders, and exploration of the faith role models are ways to harness the power of personal style into religious youth work. A Lilly Endowment grant and a risk-taking faculty are allowing Luther-Northwestern Theological Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota to experiment with a new curriculum designed to develop <u>persons</u>, not pastors, who will in turn <u>make</u> good pastors because they are secure and spiritually mature individuals. This overall premise filters down into their training of youth leaders, as well. In short, adults involved in religious youth work must, in some way, experience what religious youth work hopes to accomplish with teenagers: spiritual awakening and healthy growth into well-adjusted adulthood.

II. The Challenge of Reaching Unserved and Underserved Populations

In religious youth programs, reaching unserved and underserved populations primarily means addressing the young adolescent, the at-risk adolescent, and the urban low-income adolescent, teenagers who are unlikely to report involvement in today's religious communities. While youth leaders report greater numbers of young adolescents than older youth participating in religious youth activities, far more

teenagers of all ages are not participating in religious youth organizations than are (Search, 1990).

But today's religious youth work is almost exclusively directed at the teenager who is already a part of a religious community. Sometimes this is an overt strategy; sometimes unserved youth are overlooked because young people who do not participate in religious communities tend to be invisible to them. Either way, the research indicates that most at-risk and urban low-income adolescents elude religious communities; young adolescents either fall into one of the above categories or are underserved in the communities where they are present.

While religious youth work has expanded in the direction of young adolescence, most of those surveyed for this project found young adolescent religious youth programs inferior to senior high religious youth work in terms of both program and leadership quality. Youth leaders expressed frustration at the lack of training events which focus on young adolescents, and at the inconsistency and uncertainty plaguing much young adolescent leadership and programming. Debates over the boundaries of adolescence also keep such programs from fully servicing youth; religious communities still resist considering fifth and sixth graders "adolescents."

Those unserved youth whom religious youth programs seem least prepared to address, however, are at-risk youth, especially those in urban areas, who often exhibit multiple unmet needs and reflect complex social problems. Religious youth leaders from all vantage points profess frustration and concern over these populations; they recognize that special kinds of cultural sensitivity and leadership training are

necessary for working in these arenas, not to mention tremendous energy and vast resources.

Yet, to date, recognition of the at-risk population's needs has been almost entirely rhetorical. Few efforts to expand religious youth work creatively into these communities have been attempted beyond very specifc, local levels. The barrier of familiarity is formidable; but popularized models of religious youth work patterned on middle class white relgiious communities simply do not translate, in most cases, to the inner city, ethnic, or low-income enviroment. Just as apporaches to religious youth worker adapted to urban culture and/or at-risk adolescents are scarce, so training which equips leaders for these contexts is rare. Parachurch groups (notably Youth for Christ, Young Life, and Fellowship of Christian Athletes) have made some inroads into the city; unhampered by competing denominational agendas, and imbued with a "missionary mindset" (i.e., leaders avail themselves of the opportunity of being "sent"), these groups have found their structural flexibility an advantage in reaching unserved urban youth. Furthermore, parachurch groups tend to share an evangelical thirst for proliferation, as well as a need to sustain membership in the absence of local congregations who feed children into their programs. Philosophical and practical concerns have caused these ministries--perhaps more by default than design--to begin to seriously address hard-to-reach youth. Although interest in urban religious life is increasing in denominations as well, the support for reaching at-risk youth in these contexts is still primarily in word more than deed.

Strategies for Improvement

o Leadership training for adults who work with young adolescents at at-risk teenagers. Given the fact that, except in some local settings, religious communities do not make work with at-risk teenagers a high priority, religious youth work must begin to specify resources for low-income areas, young adolescent programming, and at-risk youth work. This will not happen naturally, and it will not happen by simply adapting older youth resources for young teens or translating English resources for Hispanic youth in the inner city. Reaching these teenagers requires developmental and cultural sensitivity as well as adaptability on the part of a leader who may or may not naturally identify with the population. These training opportunities need to be available to all religious youth workers since all will, to some extent, address one or more of these unserved/underserved populations. In addition, professional specializations on unserved populations of religious youth work can develop a cadre of committed, well-trained, and adequately resourced leaders who lead the way in addressing the needs of unserved youth.

o **Coordinated program development with community organizations in at-risk geographic regions.** At-risk populations are well-served by coordinated approaches between several organizations working cooperatively for the general well-being of the adolescent. Religious institutions can play a pivotal role in coordinating community services for adolescents.

o **Service opportunities with unserved/underserved youth.** Much of the community service which has benefited religious youth organizations has been limited to white, middle class teenagers seeking confrontation with an economically disadvantaged sector of society, a

decidedly lopsided vision of community service that borders precariously on paternalism. In addition, the vast majority of large service projects bypass young adolescents, who are therefore exempted from experiences which directly impact the lives of others. A case in point are the extraordinarily popular "work camps," a form of the residential community experience in which youth offer physical labor to construct and repair buildings in low-income areas like Appalachia or the inner city. These projects are generally reserved for senior high youth. Conscious efforts to foster mutuality between cultures involved in service projects, and to focus attention on the benefits which service opportunities can offer young adolescents, are important vehicles for including vulnerable populations in the empowering experience of giving.

- **Multicultural approaches to religious youth work.** Religious youth work no longer takes place within a single cultural context; America's unprecedented pluralism in the 1990s requires religious youth work to respond to youth cultures, not culture. Although concerted efforts have been made to support ethnic ministries, Protestant and Catholic youth work still err on the side of white middle class American values and process. This factor works against the urban, low income, and/or ethnic participation in their programs. John Roberto, director of the Center for Youth Ministry Development, notes that one barometer of success in any area of youth work is the number of printed resources it generates, and observes: "Very few resources and publications are available for persons working in multicultural settings" (Roberto, 1991). Research that addresses questions like, "What does multicultural religious youth work look like?"; "What

culture-specific approaches to religious youth work are effective?" is critically needed if religious youth work is to address large sectors of unserved adolescents.

III. The Challenge of Expanding Program Boundaries

If spiritual growth is a matter of caring for the total person as a divine creation, then a religious youth program is inherently a multifaceted proposition. Yet religious youth programs often fail to express themselves through the full range of options available to them; developing spiritual identity often ignores the need to resolve personal struggles, or vice versa. These poles must stand in tension if religious youth work is to maximize its potential of instilling both cultural/faith identity and healthy growth in an adolescent. New models of religious youth work which hold both of these goals in balance are needed to integrate religious youth work into the entire life of the adolescent, and to integrate the adolescent into the entire life of the congregation (Yaconelli, 1990). Carotta advises diversity of program as a means to flexibility, adopting the term youth programs, not program, in the 1990s. "How diverse?" he asks. "[Religious youth work] ought to be a cafeteria or a buffet, not a sit-down dinner" (Carotta, 1990).

Strategies for improvement

- **The boundaries of religious youth work need to be expanded to address the full range of needs experienced by the adolescent.** These boundaries are largely determined by the demographic make-up and needs of the youth in a particular setting. For some populations, notes Buster Soaries, a well-known inner city youth pastor, "teaching kids how to dress, how to get a job, how to get by in school" are appro-

priate tasks of youth ministry (Soaries, 1991).

- Religious youth programs must address the family. Adolescence does not exist in a vacuum; it is flanked by childhood and adulthood, both of which require their own age-level appropriate responses in religious communities which cushion them from the "inexact science" of puberty. Religious youth leaders expect to see more of their energy spent developing relationships with, and within, the entire family in the decade ahead than in years past (Martinson, 1991). New models of youth work are needed which join the family and religious community in a joint process of faith/cultural identity and adolescent development of youth, similar to the mutual parent/child involvement advocated by practicing Jews. Despite the religious community's unique access to families, however, the family has been an untapped resource.

Religious youth programs seek to address teenagers' relationships with their families, and increasingly concur that one cannot properly address the needs of youth without also, simultaneously, addressing family needs (Martinson, 1991). While the recent emphasis on "family ministry" has been criticized as "trendy" (Borman, 1990), it nonetheless receives hearty affirmation from virtually everyone in the field. Where religious youth programs consciously include work with families as part of achieving their objectives with youth, their impact on adolescents appears to increase. Consequently, programs that respond to teenagers as members of a larger family unit have experienced great popularity in their relatively brief history as an intentional piece of program design.

With increasingly complex family patterns and large numbers of youth who find it difficult to bond with significant adults in these

complex patterns, religious youth workers will experience greater pressure to provide adolescents with significant adult-teen relationships (Martinson, 1991). Families in their multiple configurations will take up more of a religious youth leader's programmatic and counseling time; this will require a heightened understanding of family dynamics on the part of religious youth workers as they help teenagers find productive means of functioning as family members. At the same time, the religious youth program will experience more pressure to become a surrogate family for those teenagers who lack family relationships. This means that religious youth programs must find ways to embody healthy family living in the context of a significant adolescent community, where youth find enacted important theological constructs like "grace," "forgiveness," and "redemption."

IV. The Challenge of Improving Networks

While denominational offices, to some extent, track the activities and emphases of programs in their jurisdictions, and while ecumenical publications like Group Publishing's Group and Junior High Ministry magazines, and Youth Specialties' Youthworker and Youthworker Update help share success stories among various religious youth programs and leaders throughout the country, by and large religious youth work is a non-networked field. With the exception of denominational offices that knew with varying degrees of certainty what local religious youth programs offered teenagers, this survey identified no ongoing, systematic effort to network religious youth programs or their leadership. Although a recent National Council of Churches gathering brought denominational youth leaders together for purposes of dialogue, this event represents a single attempt at cross-fertili-

zation, not the norm. Even less networking takes place between Christian and Jewish youth communities; no Christian educator involved in this study professed knowledge of Jewish religious youth work, and Jewish leaders--while marginally aware of some Christian youth ministry efforts--admitted to only vague impressions of their content, process, and structure.

Yet the youth programs of all religious communities possess remarkable similarities. While governing theologies differ, their youth experience similar needs. In particular, Jewish youth movements and Christian ethnic youth ministries, owing to their common concern for heightening the cultural (as well as religious) identity of youth, have very similar goals--and consequently, similar programmatic responses. To date, however, no mechanism exists within religious communities which enables these leaders to interact or dialogue about their process of outreach to youth. Denominational youth leaders, who are often those uniquely positioned for interaction with other religious communities, are so stripped of resources and personnel support that adding such dialogue to their already-bulging portfolios appears to be an unrealistic burden. Seminaries, equipped to broaden students' academic perspectives on other religious communities besides their own, simply do not make youth a priority curriculum item; students can graduate into full-time ministry with very little understanding of their own denomination's religious youth work, much less anyone else's.

Strategies for Improvement

- **Human networks.** It is true that expanding the printed resources' networking capabilities across denominational and ecumeni-

cal lines would be helpful. The real strength of networking, however, is in the people one knows, not just in the program ideas shared. The great benefit to human networking is the opportunity to share joys and struggles in the exhilarating, often frustrating experience of youth work. Given the fact that professional isolation is a major contributor to turnover of personnel in religious youth work, human networks--support groups, on-going regional training events, spiritual life gatherings between youth leaders, and so on--can be the lifeline necessary to prevent leaders from early burnout.

- **Networking with community leaders dedicated to youth work.** Religious youth work must lead religious communities towards the public sector in the coming decades by cooperating in shared approaches to addressing the multiple needs of adolescents. Conducting a project similar to the Center for Early Adolescence's 3:00 to 6:00 P.M. Study, which summarized a variety of youth programs' after-school delivery systems, would be one way to unearth various ways in which religious organizations and community-based youth groups may collaborate. More will be said about institutional cooperation below.

V. The Challenge of Institutional Collaboration

Teenagers who thrive do so in the context of structures adapted to adolescence; if the structures are not provided in the community, the teenager must construct some of his or her own, or growth is very difficult (Ianni, 1989). Yet despite the research which indicates the superiority of multi-institutional approaches in preventing at-risk behaviors (Benson, 1990), religious communities persist in addressing the needs of adolescence more or less "solo." Except for periods of

local crisis (e.g., United Way's mobilization of church groups, school clubs, civic organizations, and businesses involved in the clean-up of Charlotte, NC after Hurricane Hugo), few instances exist in which religious communities work in tandem with other institutions in a coordinated way for the well-being of youth. Occasionally several churches will combine their youth fellowship groups (usually for the purposes of expedience, rather than for the benefit of the adolescent per se). Other than this, religious youth organizations--often excluded by "separation of church and state" from active participation in the dominant teenage institution of society, the school--tend to avoid collaboration with other institutions which impact young people's lives.

Strategies for Improvement

- **Institutional partnerships.** Local congregations do not exist in isolation; nor do the youth who come to them. Given the fact that youth involvement in institutional structures apparently can help compensate for developmental detriments, religious communities must take seriously their potential contribution to healthy adolescent growth, and seek to compound that potential by coordinating efforts with other community institutions (Martinson, 1991). New initiatives which build local partnerships between parishes, schools, scouting organizations, YM/YWCA or YM/YWHA programs, and so on are needed to create a total environment conducive to wholistic adolescent development (Roberto, 1991).

VI. The Challenge of Accountability

Of the denominations consulted for this report, those most successful at program evaluation were also the denominations who could

readily articulate their vision and purpose for religious youth work. These denominations had taken the time to concretely identify the goals and objectives of their work with teenagers; they also took the time to hold subsequent religious youth work accountable to these goals and objectives. While no sanctions were imposed for religious youth programs straying from the denominational vision, this clear articulation of strategy provided a simple grid to place over any program, at any level in the denomination, and assess how well it served youth from that denomination's perspective. In the vast majority of religious youth organizations without such a grid, the entire system was vulnerable to incoherence at the least and chaos at the worst.

Strategy for Improvement

- **Establish specific, widely agreed-upon program goals as the unifying structure for all subsequent programming.** Most denominations and religious youth organizations do set goals; the question is whether they have any method of holding these goals up as a standard and encouraging religious youth programs to adhere to them. Coordinating training and program goals together, developing incentive programs like the North American Federation of Temple Youth's "Tikkun Olam," or building evaluation into part of leadership training are flexible and yet concrete mechanisms for accountability. Such minimal standardization also paves the way for interaction with secular organizations that want to know, specifically, what religious youth programs hope to accomplish with young people in the community. The 1976 Roman Catholic "Vision Statement," which simply and eloquently identified seven components of Catholic youth ministry, not

only offered local Catholic youth leaders a grid by which they can quickly assess strengths and weaknesses in a given program, but it also provided some measure of content standardization without prescribing form or process. Not every diocese subscribed to the "vision" put forth in the document, and communication problems between the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and local parishes created the usual gaps between national denominational ideals and grass-roots implementation (Harvey, 1991). Despite these barriers, however, the "Vision Statement" was followed by a decade of unprecedented growth and coherence in Catholic youth ministry, and tremendous flexibility in the application of this "vision" to both traditional and non-traditional youth ministry populations.

CONCLUSIONS

Unless religious communities undertake these challenges--improving leadership training, increasing the numbers of youth served to include young and at-risk adolescents, expanding program boundaries, creating networks, initiating institutional collaboration and offering accountability--their ability to address the needs of adolescents, spiritual or otherwise, will be severely inhibited. While much valuable adult-youth contact is accomplished through religious youth programs, the low priority assigned to youth in most religious communities results in resources which are too limited, salaries which are too low, and training opportunities which are too inaccessible to attract a strong, consistent core of professionals to the field. Even those who do take advantage of religious youth leader training find themselves ill-equipped to reach significant populations of adolescents through the church or synagogue; young adolescents, at-risk adolescents, and ethnic/urban adolescents are not adequately addressed by religious youth programs as they exist currently. The flexibility required to expand the youth populations served and the kind of programs available to them, and the commitment necessary to develop institutional cooperation, networking between professionals, and a degree of accountability are currently scarce and represent more hope than reality; their longevity in religious youth work will require an overarching vision that will cause religious communities to radically re-think their commitment to adolescents in the years ahead.

The strategies which will ease these concerns require creativity, cooperation, and funding. Dollars are critically needed to facilitate

religious communities' ability to attract, maintain, and develop adult leaders who work with adolescents. But just as insufficient funds are only part of the problem, an infusion of money alone is not the solution. The bigger challenge is the attitude shift which must prevail, from the upper reaches of denominational hierarchies to the grass roots of local religious youth movements, which reminds the religious community that adolescents are worthy of our resources, time, and personnel. Religious communities must embrace and respond to the conviction that young people's lives are too important to be left to haphazard and uninformed influence; they must be shaped by the best society has. And since adolescents are not being shaped by religious communities alone, religious communities must work in concert with others who influence youth, to till the best possible soil to nourish them.

Francis Ianni has argued that adolescents are engaged in a search for structure to guide their movement from childhood into adulthood, and that community structures have ripe opportunities to combine forces to create a common "youth charter" that can represent, model, and introduce teenagers to the new adult world they must enter. The point is not, as Ianni so rightly observes, to create "new programs" in hopes of finding the magic one that really does address "today's teens." Such a program is fiction; what is required is that existing programs that do exist create linkages between one another and the youth whom they commonly serve in order to provide them with consistent, not competing, systems of support, value structures, and patterns of interaction (Ianni, 1989).

Ianni's analysis does not explicitly mention religious communities as participants in this process; and yet, the one institution

which exists in every county, burg, small town and metropolis in the United States--the one organization with which young people could, if they so desired, come into direct contact--is the church or synagogue. In our quest to integrate society and offer young people congruence instead of confusion, we should not overlook the religious community. At present, religious communities--like most community organizations--function as independent corporations in a world full of competing independent corporations; and yet, this is a very recent self-understanding for church and synagogues, who have historically stood at the center of society as chief weavers of community threads into one unified tapestry of existence.

Those days are gone; the pluralistic culture of the emerging twenty-first century offers a far richer tapestry than any single institution can weave. And yet, religious communities still make good looms, frames on which we try to make sense of multiple strands of existence, coordinating agents for all manner of disaster relief, personal understanding, and service to community needs. The common denominator in all of the challenges which, according to those involved in this report, face religious youth programs today is that they bring the religious community out into the public arena (Martinson, 1991; Roberto, 1991). If religious communities are to address our young, then they cannot do so as privatized corporations; they must do so as participants in a common charter which provides for the welfare of adolescents. In many ways, religious communities are uniquely situated to galvanize this vision. If, as Search Institute and others have surmised, the community structures and values available in a religious community provide a context which eases the

transition from youth to adulthood; if, as empirical research suggests, religiosity has a certain "innoculative" effect against at-risk behaviors; and if, as some of literature indicates, involvement in a religious community increases the likelihood of prosocial behavior in teenagers, then there may be a quantifiable case for encouraging linkages between youth and religious programs designed for them. If the quantifiable case cannot be made, religious youth programs still remain key actors in that "youth charter" Francis Ianni has argued is so important in the transition into adulthood, "both the declaration of independence and the constitution for this new transitional state, which should provide unhurried migration from childhood to adulthood as an integral part of the life journey" (Ianni, 1989, p. 268).

ENDNOTES

1
Group Publications (Loveland, CO); Youth Specialties (El Cajon, CA); Don Bosco Multimedia (New Rochelle, NY).

2
In particular, the "Network" papers published by Don Bosco Multimedia with the Center for Youth Ministry Development, were germane to much of this project, as were selected issues of Group magazine, Junior High Ministry magazine, Youthworker journal, and "Youthworker Update" newsletter.

3
Search Institute, Lilly Endowment.

4Of particular help was the index to the Journal of Jewish Communal Service.

5
Southern Baptist Convention (membership: 14,722,617); The United Methodist Church (membership: 9,124,575); Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (membership: 5,288,230); Church of Jesus Christ-Latter Day Saints (membership: 4,000,000); Presbyterian Church U.S.A. (membership: 2,967,781); Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (membership: 2,614,375); Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. (membership: 2,462,300); African Methodist Episcopal Church (membership: 2,210,000); Assemblies of God (2,160,667); United Church of Christ (membership: 1,662,568). Source: The World Almanac and Book of Facts 1990 (New York: Pharos Books), pp. 610-611; Jacquet, C.H. (ed.) Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches 1989 (Nashville: Abingdon).

6
The national Christian education staff person for the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Church, the national staff person for Hispanic ministry for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, the Asian-American editor of the only resource in print on Pacific/Asian American religious youth work, the national youth staff person for the Unitarian Universalist denomination. Two denominational staff persons contacted also represented Pacific/Asian American constituencies, as well as their denominational offices. The denominational leadership of the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A. was unavailable for comment for this report.

7
The National Zionist Youth Foundation, B'nai B'rith Youth Organization, Youth for Christ, Young Life, and Fellowship for Christian Athletes were consulted for this report. Although Youth for Christ, Young Life, and Fellowship for Christian Athletes are among the most well-known national parachurch organizations, membership statistics were unavailable to assess their relative size in comparison with other national parachurch youth ministries. The term parachurch has been criticized as casting these organizations into "second class citizenship" in comparison with churches' ministry. However,

the word parachurch, which means literally "alongside the church," was preferred by three of the four independent Christian youth movements contacted for this study who do, in fact, see themselves as parallel organizations to churches and who desire, and seek, cooperation with local congregations. The director of Fellowship for Christian Athletes preferred the term "intrachurch" organization because he believed it more aptly described the relationship F.C.A. has with local congregations--a relationship which is, in fact, more intentionally integrated into local church programs than other parachurch groups reported.

8 Support agencies consulted include the United Jewish Association/Federation, the Congress of National Black Churches, the Center for Early Adolescence, the Center for Youth Studies, Boys' Town, and Youth Ministries Television Network. Efforts to contact the Christian Coalition for Youth Initiatives discovered that the agency had moved, and could not be traced in time for this report. Several other agencies involved in various aspects of adolescent research were contacted but were deemed outside the purview of this project.

9 Three organizations best known in this capacity and included in this project are two non-denominational organizations, Group Publications (Loveland, CO) and Youth Specialties (El Cajon, CA), whose publishing and leadership training departments operate "for profit" and whose youth events are considered "not-for-profit"; and the Catholic-based Center for Youth Minsitry Development (Naugatuck, CT), which does not sponsor youth events and is entirely "not-for-profit."

10 Besides the members of the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development task force for this project, the unpublished work of Dr. Stuart McLean (Phillips Graduate Seminary), Dr. Sara Little (Pacific School of Theology), Dr. Roland Martinson (Luther-Northwestern Theological Seminary), Dr. Elizabeth Nordbeck (Lancaster Theological Seminary), Dr. Michael Warren (St. John's University), Dr. Larry Rasmussen (Union Theological Seminary), and Dr. Robin Maas (Wesley Theological Seminary) provided insight into religious youth work generally, and especially into what theological education is, and is not, doing to prepare leadership for religious youth work in the 1990s.

11 With enormous gratitude to the research associate for this project, Mr. Paul Yost of the Department of Psychology, University of Maryland at College Park, whose relentless scrutiny and considered insight made this paper possible.

12 See Wilcox's (1979) exploration of cognitive developmental theory in religious education; on moral development, see Kohlberg (1963), Dykstra (1981), and Gilligan (1982); on social and emotional development, see Strommen (1988).

13

Much of this research originated in and was disseminated by the Center for Early Adolescence (Chapel Hill, NC) and Search Institute (Minneapolis, MN).

14

Many types of behavior considered predictors of an adolescent who is at-risk, described by Dryfoos (1990), figure prominently in research on religiosity and at-risk behavior: substance abuse, sexual activity, school failure and dropout, physical/sexual abuse, homelessness, and suicide. Religiosity research did not deal with adolescent populations and suicide, and did not directly address relationships between religiosity and school failure/dropout, homelessness, or physical sexual abuse.

15

Religiosity (participation and salience) is related to less likely delinquent behavior, such as truancy, drug use, major and minor theft, trespassing, property damage, fights, weapon use (Albrecht, Chadwick & Alcorn, 1977; Burkett & White, 1977; Cochran, 1988; Forliti & Benson, 1986; Higgins & Albrecht, 1977; Sloane & Potvin, 1986).

16

For example, see Ng (1988); Paris (1985); Roberts (1980).

17

Dryfoos (1990) found at-risk behaviors in between 4-31 percent of the sample; most of these youth exhibited multiple risky behaviors Benson (1990) found 4 or more at-risk characteristics in 31 percent of 6th-12th grade. Search Institute (1990) found 3 or more at-risk behaviors in 15-40 percent of church-affiliated youth.

18

The Society for St. Andrew, for example, developed several gleaning projects which are now adapted for use, along with a curriculum unit on hunger, with teenagers and local farmers from their communities on the day after a harvest. This means that youth groups no longer need to travel to a specific site to participate in one nationally-sponsored event; they can develop similar experiences in their own communities.

DENOMINATIONAL OFFICES: PHONE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

ORGANIZATION:_____ CONTACT:_____

ADDRESS:_____ PHONE:_____

Report overview and purpose:

I. Primary topics of interest: Early adolescence (ages 10-15), high risk youth (as defined by you), non-school activities, needs of youth that the church/synagogue are meeting, needs you are not meeting.

Questions:

EXTENT OF SERVICE TO YOUNG ADOLESCENTS (AGES 10-15)

1. How do you define "youth"?
   ___ ages 11-17 ___ ages 14-17 ____ Other:

2. How do you define "youth ministry"?

3. What do you consider the goal of youth ministry?

In your opinion, how well is (DENOMINATION)'s youth ministry realizing that goal?

Very well	Above average	Average	Below average	Poorly
X	X	X	X	X

4. Excluding religious schools, what are the primary form(s) (DENOMINATION) "youth ministry" takes?
   ___ RYO (type:_____) ____ Sunday School/CCD
   ___ Confirmation ____ Youth choir
   ___ Youth worship experiences ____ Bible studies
   ___ Camps/assemblies/retreats ____ Service projects
   ___ Group activities ____ Other:

5. Are you aware of any figures that estimate how many kids are served by (DENOMINATION) youth ministry?

   How many of these youth are between the ages of 10-15?

6. In your opinion, how well is (DENOMINATION) youth ministry meeting the needs of youth between the ages of 10-15?

Very well	Above average	Average	Below average	Poorly
X	X	X	X	X

   What is your role in helping (DENOMINATION) local churches have access to information sharing in youth ministry?

7. For the next 4 questions, choose between the following answers:
   Youth 10-15, Youth over 15, Both, or Neither

   IN YOUR OPINION:
   Is (DENOMINATION) youth ministry more available to:
   ___ Youth 10-15 ___ Youth over 15 ___Both ___Neither

   Is (DENOMINATION) youth ministry more utilized by:
   ___ Youth 10-15 ___ Youth over 15 ___Both ___Neither

   Is (DENOMINATION) youth ministry more responsive to the needs of:
   ___Youth 10-15 ___Youth over 15 ___Both ___Neither

   Is the emphasis in (DENOMINATION) youth ministry in the 1990s likely to be:
   ___Youth 10-15 ___Youth over 15 ___Both ___Neither

8. Briefly describe your denomination's national approach to youth ministry (we're looking for exemplary approaches/models). What is it like in terms of CONTENT? PROCESS? How do you conduct ACTIVITIES? How UTILIZED is it?

9. On the average, how many contact hours per week do (DENOMINATION) youth spend involved in youth ministry?
   ___ Less than 1 ___ 3-4
   ___ 1-2 ___ 5-10 ___More than 10

10. Who spends more contact hours involved in (DENOMINATION) youth ministry?

___ Youth 10-15 ___Youth over 15 ___Both ___Neither

Why?

EXTENT OF SERVICE OF LOW INCOME/MINORITY YOUTH

1. How well does (DENOMINATION) youth ministry serve low income youth?

Very well	Above average	Average	Below average	Poorly
X	X	X	X	X

Can you estimate the percentage of kids served by (DENOMINATION) youth ministry who fall in the following income brackets?

_____% low income ____% middle income ____% high income

2. How well does (DENOMINATION) youth ministry serve ethnic youth?

Very well	Above average	Average	Below average	Poorly
X	X	X	X	X

Can you quantify in any way the extent of youth ministry with ethnic youth?

(I AM GOING TO READ YOU SEVERAL SETS OF RESPONSES. PLEASE SELECT ONE ANSWER IN EACH SET:)

3. Will (DENOMINATION) youth ministry in the 1990s be more likely to address:

a) ___Ethnic youth ___Non-ethnic youth ___Both ___Neither?

b) ___Low income youth
___Middle income youth
___Upper income youth ___All of the above
___None of the above

c) ___"Churched" youth ___"Unchurched" youth

d) ___Boys and girls together ___Boys and girls separately
___Boys ___Girls

4. How would you define "at risk youth"?

What is (DENOMINATION) youth ministry doing to address these "at risk youth"?

UNIQUE CONTRIBUTIONS OF RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS TO POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

1. What is the desired outcome of (DENOMINATION) youth ministry? [OPEN ENDED QUESTION; CATEGORIES ARE FOR RECORDER'S USE ONLY]

   A___Youth/future adults who are "saved"
   B___Youth/future adults who have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ
   C___Youth/future adults who are moral decision-makers
   D___Youth/future adults who are sensitive to the needs of others
   E___Youth/future adults with self-esteem
   F___Future church/synagogue members
   G___Youth/future adults who have a sense of religious/ethnic identity
   H___Productive member of society
   I___Works to serve the community
   J___Lives a live in agreement with teachings of church/synagogue

   If you had to pick one outcome as the most important, which would it be?

2. What unique contributions do religious organizations make to adolescent development?

3. What needs should be met by religious youth organizations/youth ministry that aren't?

4. How are the particular needs of high risk youth addressed by religious youth organizations/youth ministry?

5. How are the needs of early adolescents addressed by religious youth organizations/youth ministry?

PROGRAM EVALUATION

1. What criteria do you use to judge effective youth ministry?
   ___Number of kids involved
   ___Spiritual growth of kids
   ___Specific outcome measures
   ___No formal criteria
   ___Church activity among youth
   ___Can't judge till they become adults
   ___Other

   Do you use any formal criteria? If so, what?

   How useful are they?

2. In your judgment, what are the strengths of (DENOMINATION) youth ministry?

3. What would you do to improve it?

   What has been the barrier(s) in addressing these needs so far?

   Do you think these needs will be addressed in the 1990s?

YOUTH WORKER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

1. Typically, who are the adult leaders in (DENOMINATION) youth ministry?

2. What percentage are:
   ___Paid full-time ___Paid part-time ___Volunteers
   ___Ordained ___Lay

3. How many hours do most youth leaders spend each week engaged in youth ministry?
   ____Volunteers ___Paid part-time ____Paid full-time

4. How are most (DENOMINATION) youth workers trained?
   ___Seminary ___Denom'l workshops
   ___Ecumenical workshops
   ___Colleges ___On-the-job training
   ___Certification program ___No training

   Is any training required for (DENOMINATION) youth workers?
   ___Yes ___No

Please describe this training:

5. Are you aware of any specialized training in (DENOMINATION) youth ministry for early adolescence?
___Yes ___No

Please describe.

How effective is this training?
How can it be improved?

6. Are you aware of any specialized training for high risk youth through your denomination?
___Yes ___No

Please describe.

How effective is this training?

How can it be improved?

7. In your opinion, how effective is most (DENOMINATION) youth worker training at this point in time?

Very	Above average	Average	Below average	Lousy
X	X	X	X	X

8. What form of youth worker training is currently most effective?

Why?

9. What form of youth worker training is currently least effective?

Why?

10. How can (DENOMINATION) youth worker training be improved?

FUNDING

1. What are the major sources of funding for (DENOMINATION) youth ministry?

2. Is funding increasing or decreasing?

3. How easy is it to adequately fund youth ministry in low income areas?

Very easy	Easy	Depends on church	Difficult	Impossible
X	X	X	X	X

How easy is it to adequately fund youth ministry in middle income areas?

Very easy	Easy	Depends on church	Difficult	Impossible
X	X	X	X	X

How easy is it to adequately fund youth ministry in high income areas?

Very easy	Easy	Depends on church	Difficult	Impossible
X	X	X	X	X

4. What portion of (DENOMINATION) resources are devoted to youth ministry?

Is this amount:
___Adequate ___More than needed ___Less than needed
___Far less than needed

GENDER ISSUES IN YOUTH MINISTRY

1. Do you know of any gender-specific forms of youth ministry (which specifically target girls or boys) in your denomination?

Please describe them briefly:

2. For the next 3 questions, please answer: Boys, Girls, Neither, or Both

Is (DENOMINATION) youth ministry more available to:
___Boys ___Girls ___Neither ___Both

Is (DENOMINATION) youth ministry more utilized by:
___Boys ___Girls ___Neither ___Both

Is (DENOMINATION) youth ministry more responsive to the needs of:
___Boys ___Girls ___Neither ___Both

If more responsive to the needs of girls or boys, how?

___Content:
___Process:
___Leadership:

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

1. What needs of youth should religious organizations address in the next decade?

2. What new directions in youth ministry do you see being pursued in the next decade?

RESEARCH

1. What research are you aware of re:

   Early adolescence and religious development?

   High risk youth and religious development?

   Religious program evaluation?

   Gender differences in religious youth organizations?

2. How do we get this information?

RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS/SEMINARIES: PHONE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

ORGANIZATION:_____ CONTACT:_____

ADDRESS:_____ PHONE:_____

Report overview and purpose:

I. Primary topics of interest: Early adolescence (ages 10-15), high risk youth (as defined by you), non-school activities, needs of youth that the church/synagogue are meeting, needs you are not meeting.

Questions:

EXTENT OF SERVICE TO YOUNG ADOLESCENTS (AGES 10-15)

1. How do you define "youth"?
   ___ ages 11-17 ___ ages 14-17 ____ Other:

2. How do you define "youth ministry"?

3. What do you consider the goal of youth ministry?

In your opinion, how well is today's youth ministry realizing that goal?

Very well	Above average	Average	Below average	Poorly
X	X	X	X	X

4. Excluding religious schools, what are the primary form(s) intentional "youth ministry" takes?

___ RYO (type:_____)
___ Confirmation
___ Youth worship experiences
___ Camps/assemblies/retreats
___ Group activities
___ Sunday School/CCD
___ Youth choir
___ Bible studies
___ Service projects
___ Other:

5. Are you aware of any research that estimates how many American kids are served by youth ministry?

How many of these youth are between the ages of 10-15?

6. In your opinion, how well is youth ministry meeting the needs of youth between the ages of 10-15?

Very well	Above average	Average	Below average	Poorly
X	X	X	X	X

7. For the next 4 questions, choose between the following answers:
Youth 10-15, Youth over 15, Both, or Neither

IN YOUR OPINION:
Is youth ministry more available to:
___ Youth 10-15 ___ Youth over 15 ___Both ___Neither

Is youth ministry more utilized by:
___ Youth 10-15 ___ Youth over 15 ___Both ___Neither

Is youth ministry more responsive to the needs of:
___Youth 10-15 ___Youth over 15 ___Both ___Neither

Is the emphasis in youth ministry in the 1990s likely to be:
___Youth 10-15 ___Youth over 15 ___Both ___Neither

8. From your observation, out of every 10 kids in the general population ages 10-15, how many are intentionally touched by youth ministry?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

9. On the average, how many contact hours per week do youth spend involved in youth ministry?
___ Less than 1 ___ 3-4
___ 1-2 ___ 5-10 ___More than 10

10. Who spends more contact hours involved in youth ministry?
___ Youth 10-15 ___Youth over 15 ___Both ___Neither

Why?

EXTENT OF SERVICE OF LOW INCOME/MINORITY YOUTH

1. How well does youth ministry serve low income youth?

Very well	Above average	Average	Below average	Poorly
X	X	X	X	X

Can you estimate the percentage of kids served by youth ministry who fall in the following income brackets?

_____% low income ____% middle income ____% high income

2. How well does youth ministry serve ethnic youth?

Very well	Above average	Average	Below average	Poorly
X	X	X	X	X

Can you quantify in any way the extent of youth ministry with ethnic youth?

(I AM GOING TO READ YOU SEVERAL SETS OF RESPONSES. PLEASE SELECT ONE ANSWER IN EACH SET:)

3. Will youth ministry in the 1990s be more likely to address:

a) ___Ethnic youth ___Non-ethnic youth ___Both ___Neither?

b) ___Low income youth
___Middle income youth
___Upper income youth ___All of the above
___None of the above

c) ___"Churched" youth ___"Unchurched" youth

d) ___Boys and girls together ___Boys and girls separately
___Boys ___Girls

4. How would you define "at risk youth"?

What is youth ministry doing to address these "at risk youth"?

UNIQUE CONTRIBUTIONS OF RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS TO POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

1. What is the desired outcome of youth ministry?
[OPEN ENDED QUESTION; CATEGORIES ARE FOR RECORDER'S USE ONLY]

A___Youth/future adults who are "saved"
B___Youth/future adults who have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ
C___Youth/future adults who are moral decision-makers
D___Youth/future adults who are sensitive to the needs of others
E___Youth/future adults with self-esteem
F___Future church/synagogue members
G___Youth/future adults who have a sense of religious/ethnic identity
H___Productive member of society
I___Works to serve the community
J___Lives a live in agreement with teachings of church/synagogue

If you had to pick one outcome as the most important, which would it be?

2. What unique contributions do religious organizations make to adolescent development?

3. What needs should be met by religious youth organizations/youth ministry that aren't?

4. How are the particular needs of high risk youth addressed by religious youth organizations/youth ministry?

5. How are the needs of early adolescents addressed by religious youth organizations/youth ministry?

PROGRAM EVALUATION

1. What criteria do you use to judge effective youth ministry?

___Number of kids involved
___Spiritual growth of kids
___Specific outcome measures
___No formal criteria
___Church activity among youth
___Can't judge till they become adults
___Other

Do you use any formal criteria? If so, what?

How useful are they?

2. In your judgment, what are the strengths of today's youth ministry?

3. What would you do to improve youth ministry?

What has been the barrier(s) in addressing these needs so far?

Do you think these needs will be addressed in the 1990s?

YOUTH WORKER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

1. Typically, who are the adult leaders in youth ministry?

2. What percentage are:
___Paid full-time ___Paid part-time ___Volunteers
___Ordained ___Lay

3. How many hours do most youth leaders spend each week engaged in youth ministry?
____Volunteers ___Paid part-time ____Paid full-time

4. How are most youth workers trained?
___Seminary ___Denom'l workshops
___Ecumenical workshops
___Colleges ___On-the-job training
___Certification program ___No training

Is any training required for most youth workers?
___Yes ___No

Please describe this training:

5. Are you aware of any specialized training in youth ministry for early adolescence?
___Yes ___No

Please describe.

How effective is this training?

How can it be improved?

6. Are you aware of any specialized training for high risk youth?
___Yes ___No

Please describe.

How effective is this training?

How can it be improved?

7. In your opinion, how effective is most youth worker training at this point in time?

Very	Above average	Average	Below average	Lousy
X	X	X	X	X

8. What form of youth worker training is currently most effective?

Why?

9. What form of youth worker training is currently least effective?

Why?

10. How can youth worker training be improved?

FUNDING

1. What are the major sources of funding for youth ministry?

2. Is funding increasing or decreasing?

3. How easy is it to adequately fund youth ministry in low income areas?

Very easy	Easy	Depends on church	Difficult	Impossible
X	X	X	X	X

How easy is it to adequately fund youth ministry in middle income areas?

Very easy	Easy	Depends on church	Difficult	Impossible
X	X	X	X	X

How easy is it to adequately fund youth ministry in high income areas?

Very easy	Easy	Depends on church	Difficult	Impossible
X	X	X	X	X

4. What portion of most denominations' resources are devoted to youth ministry?

Is this amount:
___Adequate ___More than needed ___Less than needed
___Far less than needed

GENDER ISSUES IN YOUTH MINISTRY

1. Do you know of any gender-specific forms of youth ministry (which specifically target girls or boys)?

Please describe them briefly:

2. For the next 3 questions, please answer: Boys, Girls, Neither, or Both

Is youth ministry more available to:
___Boys ___Girls ___Neither ___Both

Is youth ministry more utilized by:
___Boys ___Girls ___Neither ___Both

Is youth ministry more responsive to the needs of:
___Boys ___Girls ___Neither ___Both

If more responsive to the needs of girls or boys, how?

___Content:
___Process:
___Leadership:

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

1. What needs of youth should religious organizations address in the next decade?

2. What new directions in youth ministry do you see being pursued in the next decade?

RESEARCH

1. What research are you aware of re:

   Early adolescence and religious development?

   High risk youth and religious development?

   Religious program evaluation?

   Gender differences in religious youth organizations?

2. How do we get this information?

3. What youth ministries do you consider exemplary/model programs or approaches? Describe:

TOPICS OF INTEREST ON JEWISH YOUTH WORK
for research being conducted by
The Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development
"Project on Youth Development and Community Programs"

Interviewer: Kenda Creasy Dean
Topic: "A Synthesis of Research On, and a Descriptive Overview of, Religious Youth Organizations"

Note: These questions are intended to address American Jewish youth, but please feel free to qualify this restriction where you feel necessary.

I. DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE TO YOUTH

1. Who in the Jewish community is offering services to youth?
2. What ages are encompassed by these programs/services?
3. What is the nature of these programs/services? (excluding elementary, junior high, or high schools)
4. What is the goal of Jewish youth work in these various contexts?
5. How well do you think Jewish youth work is accomplishing these goals?

II. EXTENT OF SERVICE TO YOUNG ADOLESCENTS (AGES 10-15)

1. Number of youth served by Jewish youth work
2. Percentage of these youth who are between the ages of 10-15
3. How well do you think Jewish youth work meets the needs of young adolescents (ages 10-15)?
4. How many contact hours per week would the average Jewish adolescent spend involved in Jewish youth activities?
5. Do youth under 15 or over 15 tend to spend more time in these activities?
6. Do you see any trends in Jewish youth work which will impact young adolescents in the 1990s?
7. What are the particular needs of young adolescents which are addressed by Jewish youth work?

III. EXTENT OF SERVICE TO LOW INCOME YOUTH

1. How well do you think Jewish youth work addresses low income youth?
2. Percentage of American Jewish youth considered low income.
3. In the 1990s, do you see any trends in Jewish youth work which will impact low income youth?

IV. EXTENT OF SERVICE TO YOUTH OF COLOR

1. How well do you think Jewish youth work addresses youth of color?
2. In the 1990s, do you see any trends in Jewish youth work which will impact youth of color?

V. EXTENT OF SERVICE TO AT-RISK YOUTH

1. What does the Jewish community do to address the needs of at-risk youth?
2. How are these programs meeting the particular needs of at-risk youth?

VI. FOCUS OF JEWISH YOUTH WORK

1. Is the focus of Jewish youth work on the youth who is religiously Jewish, culturally Jewish, Jewish but unaffiliated with a synagogue--or not Jewish at all?
2. How important is it in Jewish youth work to make a connection between the youth and a worshipping congregation?

IV. GENDER ISSUES IN JEWISH YOUTH WORK

1. Are there any gender-specific forms of youth work in the Jewish community?
2. Do you perceive Jewish youth work to be more available to either boys or girls? Does it respond better to one or the other?

V. UNIQUE CONTRIBUTIONS OF JEWISH YOUTH WORK TO ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT

1. What is the desired outcome(s) of intentionally Jewish youth work?
2. What is the unique contribution of a religious/Jewish youth organization to adolescent development?
3. What needs should be addressed by Jewish youth work which are not?

VI. PROGRAM EVALUATION

1. What criteria do you use to evaluate effective Jewish youth work?

2. In your judgment, what are the strengths of Jewish youth work?
3. What would you do to improve it?

VII. YOUTH WORKER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

1. Typically, who are the adult leaders in Jewish youth work? What do they do?
2. What percentage are paid staff (full-time, part-time) vs. volunteer? What percentage are clergy? How does this vary from context to context?
3. How many hours per week do volunteers spend engaged in Jewish youth leadership?
4. How are most adult workers with Jewish youth trained? Is any training required? What is it like?
5. Is any specialized training available for adults working with early adolescents? How effective is it? How might it be improved?
6. Is any specialized training available for adults working with at-risk youth? How effective is it? How might it be improved?
7. In your opinion, how effective is most Jewish youth worker training at this point in time?
8. What model is most/least effective?
9. What should be done to improve training for Jewish youth workers?

VIII. FUNDING

1. What are the major sources of funding for Jewish youth work?
2. Is this funding increasing or decreasing?
3. Is it harder to fund Jewish youth work in low income areas than in middle or upper income areas?
4. Is the amount of funding available for Jewish youth work adequate?

IX. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

1. What are the needs of youth that Jewish youth work ought to address in the 1990s?
2. What new directions do you see being pursued by the Jewish community in terms of youth work in the 1990s?

References

Albrecht, S. L., Chadwick, B. A., & Alcorn, D. S. (1977). Religiosity and deviance: Application of an attitude-behavior contingent consistency model. Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 16, 263-274.

Altman, S. M. (1988). Competencies required of Jewish community center professionals - Today and tomorrow. Journal of Jewish Communal Service, 64, 256-263.

Amoateng, A. Y., & Bahr, S. J. (1986). Religion, family, and adolescent drug abuse. Sociological Perspectives, 29, 53-76.

Anderson, F. (1989). The pastor: Key to effective youth ministry. Affirmation, 2, 85-96.

Archbold, P. C. (1991, February 6). Personal interview. Associate Pastor for Hispanic and Special Ministries, First Church of the Brethren, Brooklyn, NY.

Barna, G. (1990). The frog in the kettle: What Christians need to know about life in the year 2000. Ventura, CA: Regal Books.

Barrett, M. E., Simpson, D. D., & Lehman, W. E. (1988). Behavioral changes of adolescents in drug abuse intervention programs. Journal of Clinical Psychology, 44, 461-473.

Benson, P. L. (1990). The troubled journey: A portrait of 6th-12th grade youth. Minneapolis: Search Institute.

Benson, P. L., & Williams, D. L. (1987). Determining needs in your youth ministry. Loveland, CO: Group Books.

Benson, P. L., Williams, D. L., & Johnson, A. L. (1987). The quicksilver years: The hopes and fears of early adolescence. San Francisco: Harper & Row.

Benson, P. L., Wood, P. K, & Johnson, A. L. (1984). Highlights from the national study. Momentum, 15, 9-11.

Blackwell, G. L. (1991, January 4). Phone interview, Denominational Staff, African Methodist Episcopal - Zion Church, Chicago, IL.

Boriak, R. (1990, December 20). Phone interview. Denominational Staff, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Chicago, IL.

Borman, D. (1990, December 3). Phone interview. Director, Center for Youth Studies, Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, MA.

Gregory, H. (1984). In G. P. Brown. The role of the black church

in addressing the problems of children and youth. Carnegie meeting papers, June 5, 1984. Carnegie Corporation of New York, New York.

Burkett, S. R., & White, M. (1974). Hellfire and delinquency: Another look. Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 13, 455-462.

Carotta, M. (1990, November 15). Phone interview, Boys Town, Boys Town, NE.

Clark, C. A., Worthington, E. L., Jr., & Danser, D. B. (1988). The transmission of religious beliefs and practices from parents to firstborn early adolescent sons. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 50, 463-472.

Cochran, J. K. (1988). The effect of religiosity on secular and ascetic deviance. Sociological Focus, 21, 293-306.

Coles, R. (1990). The spiritual life of children. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Crawford, V. (1991, January 15). Phone interview. Congress of National Black Churches, Washington, D.C.

Cross, R. (1990, December 19). Phone interview. Staff, Youth for Christ, Wheaton, IL.

Davis, G. L. (1986). Spiritual direction: A model for adolescent catechisms. Religious Education, 81, 267-279.

Day, M. (1990, Dec. 12). Phone interview. Denominational Staff, Southern Baptist Convention, Memphis, TN.

Dean, K. (1990). Now what? A new vision of youth ministry, Youth and the Evangelization of American Culture Conference (March 11, 1990), Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, D.C.

DeLamater, J. (1981). The social control of sexuality. Annual Review of Sociology, 7, 263-290.

Dryfoos, J. G. (1990). Adolescents-at-risk: Prevalence and prevention. New York: Oxford University Press.

Dudley, R. L. (1978). Alienation from religion in adolescents from fundamentalist religious homes. Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 17, 389-398.

Dykstra, C. (1981). Vision and character: A Christian educator's response to Kohlberg. New York: Paulist Press.

Dykstra, C. (1986). Youth and the language of faith. Religious Education, 81, 163-184.

Edwards, W. H. (1989). Ministry in the black communities: A base

community approach (Network Paper No. 28). New Rochelle, NY: Don Bosco Multimedia.

Elad, G. (1991, January 16). Personal interview. Associate Executive Director, American Zionist Youth Foundation, New York, NY.

Elifson, K. W., Petersen, D. M., & Hadaway, C. K. (1983). Religiosity and delinquency. Criminology, 4, 505-527.

Elizondo, J. (1990, December 13). Phone interview. Denominational Staff, Southern Baptist Convention Sunday School Board, Nashville, TN.

Elkind, D. (1961). The child's conception of his religious denomination, I: The Jewish child. Journal of Genetic Psychology, 99, 209-225.

Elkind, D. (1962). The child's conception of his religious denomination, II: The Catholic child. Journal of Genetic Psychology, 101, 185-193.

Elkind, D. (1963) The child's conception of his religious denomination, III: The Protestant child. Journal of Genetic Psychology, 103, 291-304.

Elkind, D. (1988). The hurried child: Growing up too fast too soon (Revised). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

Elkind, D., & Elkind, S. (1962). Varieties of Religious experience in young adolescents. Scientific Study of Religion, 2, 102- 112.

Erickson, J. B. (1989). 1990-1991 Directory of American youth organizations. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing.

Erikson, E. H. (1968). Identity: Youth and crisis. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Farel, A. M. (1982). Early adolescence and religion: A status study. Carrboro, NC: Center for Early Adolescence.

Forliti, J. E., & Benson, P. L. (1986). Young adolescents: A national survey. Religious Education, 81, 199-224.

Fowler, J. W. (1981). Stages of faith: The psychology of human development and the quest for meaning. San Francisco: Harper & Row.

Frank, D. (1990, December 20). Phone interview. Denominational Staff, North American Federation of Temple Youth, New York, NY.

Frank, D. (1991, February 5). Phone interview. Denominational

Staff, North American Federation of Temple Youth, New York, NY.

Gardner, J. W. (1991, March). Community. Unpublished paper.

Gecas, V., Thomas, D. L., & Weigert, A. J. (1973). Social identities in Anglo and Latin adolescents. Social Forces, 51, 477-484.

Gilligan, C. (1982). New maps of development: New Visions of maturity. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 52, 199-212.

Girl Scouts of the United States of America. (1989). Girl scouts survey on the beliefs and moral values of America's children. New York: Girl Scouts of the United States of America.

Goldman, R. (1968). Religious thinking from childhood to adolescence. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Guerin, M. (1987). Beyond the vision (Occasional paper #12). Naugatuck, CT: Center for Youth Ministry Development.

Guernsey, D. B. (1982). A new design for family ministry. Elgin, IL: David C. Cook Publishing Company.

Haas, M. G., & Newlon, B. J. (1990). Voices from the desert: Concerns of Tucson's Jewish youth. Journal of Jewish Communal Service, 67, 43-51.

Hadaway, C. K., Elifson, K. W., & Petersen, D. M. (1984). Religious involvement and drug use among urban adolescents. Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 23, 109-128.

Harris, M. (1981). Portrait of youth ministry. New York: Paulist Press.

Harter, S. (1990). Self and identity development. In S. S. Feldman & G. R. Elliot (Eds.), At the Threshold: The developing adolescent (pp. 352-387). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Harvey, T. (1991, March 19). Presentation delivered to the Task Force on Youth Development and Community Programs, Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, New York, NY.

Hauser, J. (1981). Adolescents and religion. Adolescence, 16, 309-320.

Henderson, P. K. (1989). Pastoral needs of youth (Network Paper No. 25). New Rochelle, NY: Don Bosco Multimedia.

Henderson, P. K. (1990, December 14). Phone Interview. Denominational Staff, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C.

Hendrix, L. E., Robinson-Brown, D. P., & Gary, L. E. (1984). Religiosity and unmarried black adolescent fatherhood. Adolescence, 19, 417-424.

Higgins, P. C., & Albrecht, G. L. (1977). Hellfire and delinquency revisited. Social Forces, 55, 952-958.

Hirschi, T., & Stark, R. (1969). Hellfire and delinquency, Social Problems, 17, 202-213.

Hoge, D. (1989). Five differences between black and white protestant youth. Affirmation, 2, 75-84.

Hoge, D. R., & Petrillo, G. H. (1979). Youth and the church. Religious Education, 74, 305-313.

Hoge, D. R., Petrillo, G. H., & Smith, E. I. (1982). Transmission of religious and social values from parents to teenage children. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 44, 569-580.

Holderness, G. W. (1976a). The exuberant years. Atlanta: John Knox Press.

Holderness, G. W. (1976b). Youth ministry: The new team approach. Atlanta: John Knox Press.

Huberman, S. (1988). Jewish megatrends - planning for the twenty-first century. Journal of Jewish Communal Service, 64, 199-309.

Ianni, R. A. J. (1989). The search for structure: A report on American youth today. New York: The Free Press.

Isberner, F. R., & Wright, W. R. (1988). Sex education in Illinois churches: The OCTOPUS program. Journal of Sex Education and Therapy, 14, 29-33.

Isser, N. (1984). The Linneweil affair: A study in adolescent vulnerability. Adolescence, 19, 629-642.

Jessor, R. Costa, F. Jessor, L. & Donovan, J. E. (1983). Time of first intercourse: A prospective study. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 44, 600-626.

Jones, M. (1989, October). I wanted to quit but I didn't. Group, 16(10), 19.

Kastner, R. L. (1991, January 16). Personal interview. Executive Director, American Zionist Youth Foundation, New York, NY.

Kett, J. F. (1977). Rites of passage: Adolescence in America 1790 to present. New York: Basic Books, Inc.

Kieren, D. K., & Munro, B. (1987). Following the leaders: Parents' influence on adolescent religious activity. Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 26, 249-255.

Kilstein, S. (1991, January 16). Personal interview. Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York, New York, NY.

Kohlberg, L. (1963). The development of children's orientation toward a moral order. Vita Humana, 6, 11-33.

Konopka, G. (1966). The adolescent girl in conflict. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Kosanovich, W. T., Jr. (1989). Confirmation and American presbyterians. Affirmation, 2, 49-64.

Kujawa, S. (1991, February 1). Phone interview. Denominational Staff, Episcopal Church in the U.S.A., New York, New York.

Lefstein, L. M., & Lipsitz, J. (1986). 3:00 to 6:00 PM: Programs for young adolescents. Carrboro, NC: Center for Early Adolescence.

Little, S. (1968). Youth, world and church. Atlanta: John Knox Press.

Little, S. (1982). Forward in A. Farel, Early adolescence and religion: A status study. Carrboro, NC: Center for Early Adolescence.

London, P., & Frank, N. (1987). Jewish identity and Jewish schooling. Journal of Jewish Communal Service, 64, 4-13.

London, P., & Hirshfeld, A. (1989). Youth programs in Israel: What the findings mean. Journal of Jewish Communal Service, 66, 87-91.

Lorch, B. R., & Hughes, R. H. (1985). Religion and youth substance use. Journal of Religion and Health, 24, 197-208.

Lowney, J. (1984). Correspondence between attitudes and drinking and drug behavior: Youth subculture over time. Adolescence, 19, 875-892.

Lynn, R. W., & Wright, E. (1971). The big little school: 200 years of the Sunday school. Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press.

Maas, R. (1989). What language shall we borrow? Talking to and about God. Affirmation, 2, 27-36.

Maas, R. (1990, December 7). Personal interview. Associate professor, Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, D.C.

Mack, E. (1991, January 7). Phone interview. Denominational

Staff, African Methodist Episcopal Church, Nashville, TN.

Marshall, M. (1989). A rich heritage. Affirmation, 2, 37-48.

Martinson, R. D. (1988). Effective youth ministry: A congregational approach. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House.

Martinson, R. (1990). Lecture delivered at Christian Educators Conference (July 1, 1990), Gettysburg Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA.

Martinson, R. (1991, February 5). Personal interview. Professor, Luther-Northwestern Theological Seminary, St. Paul, MN.

McCormick, N., Izzo, A., & Folcik, J. (1985). Adolescents' values, sexuality and contraception in a rural New York County. Adolescence, 20, 385-395.

McIntosh, W. A., Fitch, S. D., Wilson, J. B., & Nyberg, K. L. (1981). The effect of mainstream religious social controls on adolescent drug use in rural areas. Review of Religious Research, 23, 54-75.

McLean, S. D. (1989a). Rites of passage youth ministry: An alternative. Unpublished doctoral dissertation.

McLean, S. D. (1989b). Rites of passage youth ministry: An alternative. Affirmation, 2, 97-105.

Melzer, A. (1991, January 16). Personal interview. Department on Camping, UJA-Federation, New York, NY.

Miller, D. E. (1982). The developmental approach to Christian education. In J. L. Seymour, D. E. Miller (Eds). Contemporary approaches to Christian education (73-102). Nashville: Abingdon Press.

Miller, B. C. & Bingham, C. R. (1989). Family configuration in relation to the sexual behavior of female adolescents. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 51, 499-506.

Miller, B. C. & Olson, T. D. (1988). Sexual attitudes and behavior of high school students in relation to background and contextual factors. Journal of Sex Research, 24, 194-200.

Mitchel, M. E. Hue, T., McDonnell, N. S., & Swisher, J. D. (1984). Cost-effectiveness analysis of an educational drug abuse prevention program. Journal of Drug Education, 14, 271-292.

Moran, R. (1990, December 10). Phone interview. Staff, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Kansas City, MO.

Murphy, E., Guerin, M., Roberto, J., & Brown, M. W. (Eds.). (1980). Hope for the decade: A look at the issues facing Catholic ministry. Washington, D.C.: National Catholic Youth Organization Federation.

Myers, W. R. (1987). Theological themes of youth ministry. New York: The Pilgrim Press.

Myers, W. R. (1991a, February 11). Phone interview. Professor, Chicago Theological Seminary, Chicago, IL.

Myers, W.R. (1991b, April 1). Correspondence to Jane Quinn, Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, Washington, DC.

Myers, W.R. (1991c). Black and white styles of youth ministry: Two congregations in America. New York: The Pilgrim Press.

National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988. (1990). A profile of the American eighth grader: NELS:88 student descriptive summary. National Center for Education Statistics.

Nelsen, H. M. (1980). Religious transmission versus religious formation: Preadolescent-parent interaction. Sociological Quarterly, 21, 207-218.

Nelsen, H. M. (1981). Gender differences in the effects of parental discord on preadolescent religiousness. Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 20, 351-360.

Nelsen, H. M., & Potvin, R. H. (1981). Gender and regional differences in the religiosity of protestant adolescents. Review of Religious Research, 22, 268-285.

Nelson, J., & Nelson, C. (1988). Mindsets for adolescents: Religious and otherwise (Occasional Paper No. 18). Naugatuck, CT: Center for Youth Ministry Development.

Newman, P. R., & Newman, B. M. (1988). Differences between childhood and adulthood: The identity watershed. Adolescence, 23, 551-557.

Ng, D. (1988). Asian Pacific American youth ministry: Planning helps and programs. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press.

Ng, D. (1991, January 2). Phone interview. Denominational Staff, American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A., Valley Forge, PA.

Nishioka, R. (1990, December 19). Phone interview. Denominational Staff, Presbyterian Church U.S.A., Louisville, KY.

Nordbeck, E. (1990, March). Lessons from yesterday: An historical perspective on youth in the church. Address delivered at the Vision Conference 1990, Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, D.C.

Nye, W. C., & Carlson, J. S. (1984). The development of the concept of God in children. The Journal of Genetic Psychology, 145, 137-142.

Osmer, R. (1989). Challenges to youth ministry in the mainline churches: Thought provokers. Affirmation, 2, 1-25.

Ozorak, E. W. (1989). Social and cognitive influences on the development of religious beliefs and commitment in adolescence. Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 28, 448-463.

Paris, P. J. (1985). The social teaching of the black churches. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

Parker, M. & Gaier, E. L. (1980). Religion, religious beliefs, and religious practices among conservative Jewish adolescents. Adolescence, 15, 361-374.

Plutzer, A. (1991, January 16). Personal interview. Associate Director, Department on Religious Affairs, UJA-Federation, New York, NY.

Potvin, R. H. (1977). Adolescent God images. Review of Religious Research, 19, 43-53.

Potvin, R. H., & Lee, C. F. (1980). Multistage path models of adolescent alcohol and drug use: Age variations. Journal of Studies on alcohol, 41, 531-542.

Potvin, R. H., & Lee, C. F. (1982). Adolescent religion: A developmental approach. Sociological Analysis, 43, 131-144.

Potvin, R. H., & Sloane, D. M. (1985). Parental control, age, and religious practice. Review of Religious Research, 27, 3-14.

Princeton Religious Research Center. (1980). Religion in America, 1979-1980. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Religious Research Center.

Rasmus, C. (1990, December 6). Phone interview. Denominational Staff, Church of Jesus Christ-Latter Day Saints, Salt Lake City, UT.

Rasmussen, L. (1990, March). The year 2000 and the moral legacy of American culture. Address delivered at the Vision Conference 1990, Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, D.C.

Reynolds, B. B. (1990). Ministry with early adolescents (Network Paper No. 36). New Rochelle, NY: Don Bosco Multimedia.

Rice, W. (1987). Junior high ministry (Revised). Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House.

Riley, M. (1990, December 11). Phone interview. Denominational Staff, Unitarian Universalist Church, Boston, MA.

Roberto, J. (1990). Caring for the children and youth of our world (Network Paper No. 38). Rochelle, NY: Don Bosco Multimedia.

Roberto, J. (1991, January 31). Phone interview. Director, Center for Youth Ministry Development, Naugatuck, CT.

Roberts, J. D. (1980). Roots of a black future: Family and church. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.

Roehlkepartain, E. C. (1988, January/February). Junior high ministry comes of age. Junior High Ministry, 4-10.

Roehlkepartain, E. C. (Ed.). (1988). The youth ministry resource book. Loveland, CO: Group Books.

Roehlkepartain, E. C. (1989). Youth ministry in city churches. Loveland, CO: Group Books.

Roehlekepartain, J. (1990). Youth ministry: Its impact on church growth. Loveland, CO: Group Publications.

Rohde, G. (1990, November 9). Phone interview. Director of Youth Ministry, Archdiocese of St. Louis, St. Louis, MO.

Rosenzwieg, H. (1991, January 16). Personal interview. Assistant Director of Jewish Community Centers, UJA-Federation, New York, NY.

Ross, R. (1990, December 12). Phone interview. Denominational Staff, Southern Baptist Convention Sunday School Board, Nashville, TN.

Rowatt, W. (1989). A pastoral care response to adolescents in crisis. Affirmation, 2, 65-74.

Salsgiver, T. (1990, December 4). Phone interview, Denominational Staff, United Methodist Church, Nashville, TN.

Sarvela, P. D., & McClendon, E. J. (1988). Indicators of rural youth drug use. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 17, 335-347.

Savin-Williams, R. C. (1977). Age and sex differences in the adolescent image of Jesus. Adolescence, 12, 353-366.

Scales, P. (1990, November 14). Phone interview. Center for Early Adolescence, Chapel Hill, NC.

Schab, F. (1982). Early adolescence in the South: Attitudes regarding the home and religion. Adolescence, 17, 605-612.

Schlesinger, B. (1974). The Jewish family and religion. Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 5, 27-36.

Schoenberg, E. S. (1986). Conservative Judaism and adolescence. Religious Education, 81, 251-266.

Schultz, T. (1989, October). Where youth ministry is headed. Group, 16(1), 63-65.

Schultz, T. (1990a). Survey results presented at the Youth and Evangelism of America Conference (March 11, 1990), Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, D.C.

Schultz, T. (1990b, November 26). Phone interview. President, Group Publishing, Loveland, CO.

Search Institute. (1990). Effective Christian education: A national study of Protestant congregations. Minneapolis: Search Institute.

Seymour, J. L., & Miller, D. E. (1982). Contemporary approaches to Christian education. Nashville: Abingdon Press.

Shaheen, D. (1986). Growing a Jr. High ministry. Loveland, CO: Group Books.

Shanky, C. (1991, January 15). Personal interview. Director of Adolescent Services, 92nd Street Y, New York, NY.

Sloane, D. M., & Potvin, R. H. (1983). Age differences in adolescent religiousness. Review of Religious Research, 25, 142-154.

Sloane, D. M., & Potvin, R. H. (1986). Religion and delinquency: Cutting through the maze. Social Forces, 65, 87-105.

Smith, K. (1991, February 11). Phone interview. President, Chicago Theological Seminary, Chicago, IL.

Soaries, B. (1990). Effective youth ministry in black churches [Video]. Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, Inc.

Sohinkey, A. (1991, January 8). Phone interview. International Staff, B'nai B'rith Youth Organization, Washington, D.C.

Spilka, B., Hood, R. W., & Gorsuch, R. L. (1985). The psychology of religion: An empirical approach. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Stack, S. (1983). The effect of the decline in institutionalized religion on suicide, 1954-1978. Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 22, 239-252.

Staff. (1989, October). Eight hot topics in denominational youth ministry. Group, 16(1), 80-81.

Staff. (1990, September). The national salary survey. Group, 16(9), 31.

Staff. (1990, December). The troubled journey: New light on growing up healthy. Source, 4(3), 1-4.

Stareshefsky, R. (1991, February 11). Phone interview. Denominational Staff, National Council of Young Israel, New York, NY.

Stone, D. (1988). Address delivered to Youth Ministry University (February 3, 1988), St. Louis, MO.

Stone, D. (1991, January 7). Phone interview. Director, Youth Ministries Television Network, Shreveport, LA.

Strommen, M. P. (1974). Five cries of youth. San Francisco: Harper & Row.

Strommen, M. P. (1988). Five cries of youth (Revised). San Francisco: Harper & Row.

Studer, M., & Thornton, A. (1987). Adolescent religiosity and contraceptive usage. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 49, 117-128.

Suziedelis, A., & Potvin, R. H. (1981). Sex differences in factors affecting religiousness among Catholic Adolescents. Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 20, 38-51.

Svoboda, G. (1991, January 4). Phone interview. Denominational Staff, United Church of Christ, New York, NY.

Thornton, A., Alwin, D. F., & Camburn, D. (1983). Causes and consequences of sex-role attitudes and attitude change. American Sociological Review, 48, 211-227.

Thornton, A., & Camburn, D. (1989). Religious participation and adolescent sexual behavior and attitudes. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 51, 641-653.

Tisch, B. (1990, December 20). Personal interview. New York, NY.

Vener, A. M., Zaenglein, M. M., & Stewart, C. (1977). Traditional religious orthodoxy, respect for authority and nonconformity in adolescence. Adolescence, 12, 43-56.

Warren, M. (Ed.). (1978). Readings and resources for youth ministry. New York: Paulist Press.

Warren, M. (1982). Youth in the future of the church. New York: Seabury Press.

Warren, M. (1987a). Youth gospel liberation. Cambridge, NY: Harper & Row.

Warren, M. (1987b). The future of youth ministry in Canada. In M. Warren (Ed.). Youth gospel liberation. Cambridge, NY: Harper & Row.

Warren, M. (1990, March). Who's evangelizing whom? Address delivered at The Vision Conference 1990, Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, D.C.

Weigert, A. J., & Thomas, D. L. (1972). Parental Support, control and adolescent religiosity: An extension of previous research. Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 11, 389-393.

Westerdorp, F., Brink, K. L., Roberson, M. K., & Ortiz, I. E. (1986). Variables which differentiate placement of adolescents into juvenile justice or mental health systems. Adolescence, 21, 23-37.

Westerhoff, J. H., III. (1980). Bringing up children in the Christian faith. Minneapolis: Winston Press.

Westerhoff, J. H., III. (1985). Living the faith community. Minneapolis: Winston Press.

Wilke, L. (1991, March 14). Phone interview. Denominational Staff, Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, St. Louis, MO.

Wilcox, M. M. (1979). Developmental journey. Nashville: Abingdon Press.

Willits, F. K., & Crider, D. M. (1988). Religion and well-being: Men and women in the middle years. Review of Religious Research, 29, 281-294.

Willits, F. K., & Crider, D. M. (1989). Church attendance and traditional religious beliefs in adolescence and young adulthood: A panel study. Review of Religious Research, 31, 68-81.

Wood, J., Chapin, K. & Hannah, M. E. (1988). Family environment and its relationship to underachievement. Adolescence, 23, 283-290.

Woodroof, J. T. (1985). Premarital sexual behavior and religious adolescents. Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 24, 343-366.

Yaconelli, M. (1991, December 17). Phone interview. Staff, Youth Specialties, El Cajon, CA.

Yost, P. R. (1990). Early adolescence and religion: A review of the literature. Unpublished manuscript.